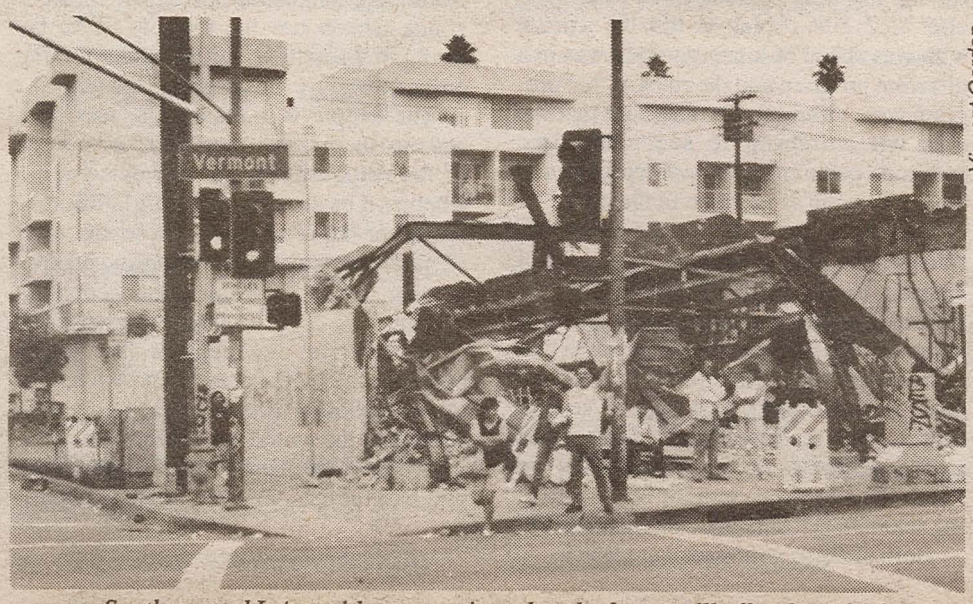
COMMEMORATOR

Published Monthly by The Commemoration Committee for The Black Panther Party
VOLUME 2 NO. 3 September, 1992

Communities In Chaos



Vincent Gordon

South-central L.A. residents question what the future will offer them, in the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict.

Los Angeles Protests-

A Call For Leadership

"No justice, no peace," was the call which went out on the streets in cities throughout the nation in the wake of the Rodney King verdicts, which acquitted four of twenty police officers whose brutal beating of three black men was partially captured by a private citizen on videotape and displayed to the entire world. The slogan, which brooked no negotiation, in itself ensured immediate intervention by local police, National Guard, INS agents and the US military, allowing them to launch indiscriminate sweeps in the community, imprisoning over 20,000 individuals and injuring an estimated 3,000. In the process, law enforcement officials were permitted to arrest people simply for being in particular locations, hold them for periods up to 10 days without arraignment, while judges were setting bails across the board as high as $50,000 for charges of petty crime and holding people in warehouses, on buses, in gymnasia, to subsist on sandwiches, often only one meal a day, without contact with job or family and without assistance of counsel. Family members were the object of warrantless seizures, with property confiscated unless the owner could provide immediate documentation of purchase, however long ago. In San Francisco, police and ancillary forces arrested thousands of protesters, largely based simply upon their exercise of their First Amendment rights.

Plea Bargaining

As a result of these coercive conditions which ignored the constitutional presumption of innocence, guilty pleas ran high even though 85% of those arrested had no

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Hospital Strikers Defend Sympathy Clause

Dozens of Summit Hospital workers remain out of work in the aftermath of a bitter strike that ended last May. Immediately after the settlement Summit management announced the planned layoffs of 300 employees, citing the costs of the strike and the loss of patient census as the cause. When union representatives lodged appeals with the three member arbitration board set up after the strike, Summit management began to modify its projection from declaring layoffs to one of "restructuring," which implies that the laid off workers may never be rehired.

Hospital Division director Bruce Richards, of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 250, which had 400 members on strike, said that none of their members had been laid off, but hours of work have been cut back and Summit management is projecting more cutbacks, despite the fact that the hospital census is back up to pre-strike levels. He said that hospital claims of continued financial difficulty as well as losses of $1 million have not been substantiated by the union, which has no access to the company's financial records. According to Local 250, one or two retaliatory firings have been attempted by Summit, to date, which the union has defeated.

Five unions of 1700 workers at Summit Medical Center in Oakland walked off their jobs May 26 in a strike that had boiled down to one principal issue: the right of one union local to support another with a sympathy strike.

Material Needs of Employees at Stake

The right of workers to act in solidarity is fundamental to patients as well as the workers with such basic questions as quality of health care for patients, job security, and benefits for the employees themselves at stake, according to representatives of the unions. SEIU Local 250, California Nurses Association, International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Local 6, Hotel Employees

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FACTS ABOUT EZs

A GEOGRAPHIC LOOK AT ENTERPRISE ZONES

SB 18X was killed 25 August in the California Senate Committee on Government Operations by a vote of 6 to 1. This setback culminated several weeks of hard work and grassroots organizing against the bill by Western Service Workers Association (WSWA) in Southern California and in Sacramento. However, a WSWA representative said: "We expect this is not the end of the 'superzone.' This bill demonstrated the real intent and purpose of enterprise zones, so if we are not successful in abolishing zones we expect more ominous proposals like this in the near future."

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA: According to the San Francisco Examiner/Chronicle columnist, Rob Morse, the San Francisco enterprise zone includes within its 9.6 square miles such businesses as: Mercedes dealerships; hotels such as the San Francisco Hilton and the St. Francis; banks including 12 branches of Bank of America and seven branches of Wells Fargo; some of the best restaurants in the city such as Trader Vic's, Donatello and Masa's; as well as some of the fastest growing and most popular stores including Nordstrom's, Victoria's Secret, The Gap, and Bang & Olufsen; not to mention City Hall.

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Editorial

Where Do We Go From Here?

Since the early stages of an emerging grassroots movement in the Bay Area after the Rodney King verdict, the Commemoration Committee has come to understand that for poor and oppressed communities coalition politics do not work as a strategy toward the elimination of oppression for low-income. What is really needed is organization with a clear-cut practice. A "practice" primarily based on the *material* interest of all poor and oppressed community. But the question that always arises is what about the majority, the white middle class communities? Oppression of working communities and cultures is something that the Commememoration Committee is against in the first place, because bigotry only serves the interest of the white power structure. Although in America, whites have historically had a privilage position in comparison to nonwhite, especially white males we have a historic responsibility to unite on the basis of material interest with the majority, not the minority ruling class.

Today, what a growing number of people, African American and working communities, have in common is poverty and a lack of power because of a lack of organization and unity. This is our first point of address. The Black Panther Party formulated a Ten-Point Platform and Program, and point number one states "We want freedom. We want Power to determine the destiny of our Black and oppressed communities." When the BPP Platform put forth, there were nine other points which, basically, outlined the various levels of oppression that African American communities suffer under including a lack of proper food, preventive health care, housing, education and employment. When people are historically denied their basic necessities to survive then it is the obligation of every citizen, be he/she is black, brown, red, yellow and white to take action that will insure that oppression is eliminated.

In the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict, a call went out from certain groups for a grand jury investigation under the Civil Rights Acts, "Inquiring into the activities of those who make the policies of its courts, its departments, its administration, in short, all those who might have acted in collusion and conspiracy to perpetrate the systematic denial of constitutional rights of the members of our communities."

The U.S. government, which has been advancing policies for ten years to pave the way for those business interests who make their money by taking advantage of a low-wage global market — bringing third world colonial conditions home — set up the primary cause of the Los Angeles protest, insufficient income and no hope of that changing. Simply doing nothing, except for a calculated transfer of the trial to suburban Simi Valley, made it possible for this mega event to happen, and now various ethnic groups are being blamed and even blaming one another for the economic and social problems that the community faces.

Politicians and demagogues are forever blaming the immigrants, the black ghetto dwellers, the white middle class, the Mexicans, the Koreans, the homeless population, the youth or the homosexuals. Governor Wilson just recently blamed immigrants and welfare mothers for the state economic woes. The result is the same: disunity among the various oppressed groups, which serves the purpose of the government and the owners of those monopolies and megacorporations positioned to profit off the exploitation and disunity of the majority. When communities are divided those who benefit from our suffering can do whatever they please. Currently that means Enterprise Zones, where the U.S. government allows large corporations and conglomerates to virtually loot the low-income community — receiving tax incentives, hiring workers at subsurvival wages, destroying unions and worker organizations, and further institutionalizing poverty. (See Enterprise Zone interview with Clovis Bourdeaux on page 11)

The federal grand jury indictment on August fifth, 1992 of the 4 police officers acquited by the Simi Valley jury does not answer the call for justice and the protests last May. Nor are any high profile "leaders" talking about investigations of that ***process*** followed by the police, the defense the prosecutor and the court system itself, which all contributed to this miscarage of justice. Instead, they are now preoccupied with the upcoming November elections. Federal authorities have made clear that they too, have no intention of addressing ***pattern*** of practice of police brutality in Los Angeles, by narrowing the indictment to individual acts of individuals officers. This will provide no relieve from the unlawful "standard practices" implemented nationwide by short-staff, overworked, and undertrained police departamnets attempting to enforce unlivable law.

The Question now is: "Do we want power, for our working class communities, the majority, or do we continue to struggle over petty differences?" Once this fundamental question is positively dealt with, the serious folks can move on toward building broadly based grassroots organizing drives, with the goal being power and liberation for all those who are oppressed by the growing economic conditions, the majority.

The U.S. government has enough roadblocks, oppressed communities don't need additional roadblocks. To keep folks unorganized. The

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Letters To The Commemorator

To Editor,

On May 28, a 19-year-old man who is staying with me was sent home from Lewis Adult School in Santa Rosa shortly after 8 a.m. He is working to get a high school diploma after spending two years in juvenile hall and probation camp.

He said he was sent home because he was one or two minutes late signing in; he arrived on time but didn't sign in immediately when he arrived, and because he let a woman go ahead of him when he did sign in. She was not sent home but he was.

When I went to the school to investigate, the teacher said that he could not get credit for the morning sessions if he was there after 8:05. She explained that the woman who was ahead of him signing in was in a different program and the rules in that program were different. She also said that she was not watching to see what time everyone came in, and it was up to him to sign in as soon as he came in the door.

Two days later, I saw a friend and she said she had to take her teenage son out of Rancho Cotati High School in Rohnert Park because he was under such stress as a result of lack of understanding on the part of the school staff. Her family has suffered many tragedies in the past years — several deaths, and she herself had a heart attack and a major surgery. There was no flexibility and no cooperation on the part of the school's teachers and administrators.

Both of these young men are Black.

Although rules have their place, for a young person who has suffered a setback in his education, or has serious problems at home, or family tragedies, encouragement is far more important than rules. He needs to know that the staff at the school is on his side. Rather than split hair over a minute here and a minute there, wouldn't it be better to give the student the message that his education is the most important thing to us, as adults, because it is in him that our future lies?

The young person will survive and make a living, one way or another. There are plenty of people ready and willing to teach youngsters the ropes in the criminal world. Isn't it better for us all if every young person has the tools to make his living legitimately, rather than feeling pushed away by the education system?

The people who discourage teenagers and turn them away from school bear some of the responsibility for the outcome — whether it be street gangs, burglaries, robberies, or the drug trade. These are, after all, just other ways of surviving and making a living, just the dark side of our economic system.

Adults are the mentors for young people; adults are the ones whose jobs it is to see that all youngsters get equipped to survive in the would we have prepared for them. How we handle that responsibility will have effects for many years to come.

-Marlene Lily

Editor's Reply:

What happened to this young man can be seen clearly through the eyes of the history of educational philosophy in the U.S. It was John Dewey himself who characterized the purpose of the public education system in the early part of this century as one that would teach dirty, ignorant, immigrant children to clean themselves, sit in neat rows, stand in straight lines and teach them to be "good citizens."

At that time, foreign immigrants were coming to the U.S. in vast numbers from Europe. For the most part they were in search of economic survival, a fact that would disqualify them for entry today. However, at that time, they were critically needed by the owners of large industries as a workforce. Their poverty and desperation forced them to work cheaply, and few American workers were willing to stay put, as land opened up to the west. Immigration of black families from the rural south served the same purpose, and allowed further opportunities to pit workers of one race against another. The "dirty foreigners" had to be cleaned up and "educated" i.e. taught enough English to find their way to work and operate machinery. Black children had to be taught "their place" in the new economic order.

Child labor was a testament to the limits immigrants found to their "education;" at 12 years of age one was ready to work hours as long as any grown-up. Higher education as we know it, only became "open" to the poor in large numbers, after WWII when the U.S. entered the space and technology race with the U.S.S.R. and needed a higher percentage of educated workers.

Open admission policies were introduced in the 1960's in response to two conditions: one economic and the other political. Economically, there was a growing population of young adults crowding the job market, for whom sufficient jobs did not exist. An aura of U.S. affluence was artificially maintained by keeping millions in school another four years, thereby keeping them out of the full time job market.

Politically, this blunted rising opposition to U.S. government policies at home and abroad by killing two birds with one stone. On the one hand it mollified a short-term demand and at the same time it kept arenas of volatile dissent bottled up on relatively isolated college and university campuses rather than allowing them to grow and incorporate the community as a whole, where everyone else lived and worked.

After Vietnam, the system of American education once again began rapidly adapting to the needs of U.S. industry, this time to lower its labor costs. Businesses able to operate in an increasingly global economy were going wherever in the world the labor costs were cheapest. Those industries unable to do so would suffer the loss of profits, leading to pay cuts, layoffs and unemployment, if not business failure. The loss of jobs and income to workers in turn eroded customer bases, consumer buying abilities. More and more only low paid, on-site, service work jobs or high-tech automated jobs were the only ones available.

Therefore the education of the young black man sent home from school for being late to class is and will continue to be less of a priority for this nation's public school system. He can read, write and count and what more is needed to drag a bar code, pasted on the side of grocery item, across a darkened screen pointed face up from a hole in a check out counter? Are these skills perhaps even overabundant to turn a robotic arm on or off on an assembly line?

Those who grasp this lesson of history, must organize themselves now, not to change the face of education in this nation, but rather to change the face of the nation, and inherently the priorities, policies and constituencies for whom and through which the educational system is shaped.

COINTELPRO Action Continues

The Black Panther party was harassed and split in the late 1960's and early 1970's through the action of covert COINTELPRO operatives of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. What the public does not know is the that government law enforcement officials have continued these tactics in order to justify, in advance, a campaign of terror and murder against members of the poor community in the event of demonstrations, sources close to the Commemorator reported.

These disclosures, which evoked a storm of protest in black communities across the nation, came to the fore in the wake of the acquittals of four Los Angeles police officers charged with racially motivated beatings of Rodney King and three others by a Simi Valley jury on April 30 of this year. The demonstrations which followed on the part of a public over 80% of which condemned the verdicts, which were handed down in the face of videotaped evidence shown on; television throughout the state, clearly showing the brutal beatings, after a controversial change of venue which removed the trail to one of the most pro-policed, conservative communities in the country, the home of many police officials, at the behest of an appellate court. No members of the black community served upon the Simi Valley jury.

"Stories such as those are seeded in the press for the purpose of protecting the police on the one hand, and terrorizing the black community on the other."

Press sources reported that law enforcement officials on the east coast of the United States had informed them that they had received threats from an alleged grouping calling itself the Black Panthers, to the effect that they were prepared to drive through the streets of New York and other major cities in such a manner as to be pulled over by police for minor traffic violations, at which time they would shoot and kill the officers.

"Stories such as those are seeded in the press for the purpose of protecting the police on the one hand, and terrorizing the black community on the other. It provides a pretext for police to defend themselves in the racially motivated beating and cold-blooded murder of blacks, and prevent anyone who wants to protest against police misconduct and the failure of the judicial system from doing so," said a representative of the ad hoc Coalition of Concerned Legal Professionals in New York.

Commemorator officials were gravely concerned with the news reports, remembering the days whey Huey Newton and others used to follow police to ensure that the rights of those who were stopped or arrested were protected. "We couldn't do that in this day and age," said Vincent Gordon, a staff writer for the Commemorator. "We would be killed; and condemned as would-be cop killers in the bargain. That's how the COINTELPRO approach works. It is designed to give the police all the power they dare assume through fantastic lies and fabrications."

On Friday, May 8, 1992, for example the *New York Post* printed a story floating a rumor that an alleged grouping calling themselves the Black Panther Party was threatening to kill police in Hyattsville, Maryland.

The *New York Post* article quotes Hyattsville police spokesman John Heidenberg as claiming his department received an anonymous call from someone

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COMMEMORATOR

Published by The Commemoration Committee for The Black Panther Party

"SERVING ALL OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES"

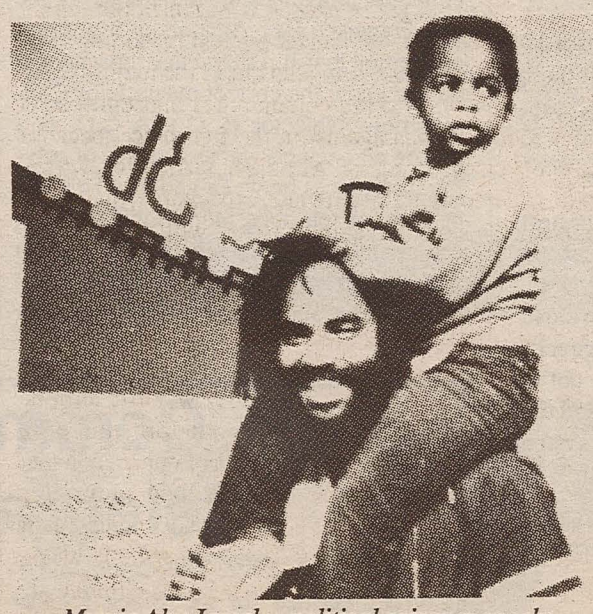
Volume 2 Number 3 September, 1992 Oakland , California

EDITOR ..... Melvin Dickson
MANAGING EDITOR ..... Vincent Gordon
DESKTOP DESIGNS/LAYOUT ..... Vincent Gordon, Richard Wagner
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS ..... Charles Andrews, Grace Nichols, ...MarleneLily, Bret Nickerson, Steve McCutchen, Vincent Gordon
GRAPHIC ARTISTS ..... L'dia Muhammed, Katja Hubbard
COMMEMORATOR STAFF .....Roosevelt C. Erby, Vickie M. Myles, Linda ..... Carson, Robert Griner, Nataka Crayton

OPINION

Mumia Abu-Jamal: The Fight For His Life Continues!

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a veteran of the Black Panther Party since age 16, later emerged as a well known and widely respected journalist reporting on racism in the United States. The *Philadelphia Tribune* called him the Voice of the Voiceless in 1980 and the same year he was elected the president of the Association of Black Journalists. Jamal now resides on death row in Philadelphia where he was framed in the killing of a local policeman. Despite much testimony which indicates that a short afroed man killed the officer, the 6 foot tall, dreadlocked Mumia was convicted in the highly political and racist court process in which he was without adequate legal defense because of his lack of funds.



Mumia Abu Jamal -- political prisoner speaks up for the black youth.

Organizers around the country have joined in support of Mumia. We learned that he was railroaded largely because of his tradition of responsible journalism. Mumia's coverage of the MOVE collective in Philadelphia made him a target of Philly political wrath.

Mumia Abu-Jamal continues to be a "voice for the voiceless" from his cell. On the eve of the recent Harris execution, [Robert Harris was arrested, in San Diego, in 1978 for the alleged murder of 2 male teenagers. He was sentence to die. On the night of the excution, the excution was stayed twice] Mumia announced on KPFA, that:

"A man with organic brain damage, if the politicians of death prevail, will usher in the roll of deadly dice that threatens over 300 men and women on California's death row, and by extension over 2,500 people in 34 states. These 2,500 people — of which I am a member — have long ago lost our lives as we became still cardboard symbols, props for faltering political campaigns, living non-persons whose features, foibles and wretched lives have propelled ambitious politicians into ever-higher office, while they promise illusions of public safety that never become reality."

THE LOST GENERATION?

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

Recent published reports have lamented the fact that Afro-American youth are remarkably resistant and virtually unresponsive to traditional, big-name public relations and big-time sports figures when they utilize the major media to attempt to communicate with younger Blacks.

The study found deep and profound alienation amongst youth, and a fundamental streak of fatalism about the promise of tomorrow — a sense that "tomorrow may not come, so let's live for today" permeates youth consciousness.

The youth, while they view large blocks of TV, perceive it from the position of outsiders, knowing that the dramas, comedies and news programs are not designed for their consumption.

Only the urbo-tech musical form known as rap touches them, for it is born of urban youth consciousness, and speaks to them, in their idiom, about lives lived on the margin.

It is this profound dissociation that forced members of the nouveau middle-class blacks to lament for youth as "the lost generation."

But are they really "lost" and, if so, to whom?

The Martiniquan Black Revolutionary, Franz Fanon once opined that every generation must find its destiny, fulfill it, or betray it.

In my father's generation, Southern-born of the late 1890s, their destiny was to move their families north, to lands with a promise of a better life away from their hateful homelands in Dixie.

The dreams of that generation, sparked by visions of new homes, better education, new cars and prosperity were, in relative terms, realized by some, but Northbound Africans were never able to outrun the stigma of racism.

By the time the 50s and 60s generation came of age, during the Nixon-Reagan-Bush eras, race once again defined the limits of Black aspirations, and with the shifting of manufacturing jobs back down South and abroad, so went the dreams of relative prosperity. The children of this generation, born in the sobering poverty amidst shimmering opulence, their minds weaned on Falcon Crestian TV excess while locked in want, watching while

Continued on next page

Lost

Continued from previous page

sinister politicians spit on their very existence, these youths are the Hip-Hop/Rap generation.

Locked out of the legal means of material survival, looked down upon by predatory politicians and police, left with the least relevant educational opportunities, talked at with contempt and not talked to with love, is there any question why such youth are alienated?

Why the Surprise?

They look at the lives they live and see but a drumbeat of civil repression by a government at war with their dreams. Why the surprise?

This is not the "lost generation."

They are the children of the L.A. protest, the children of the MOVE bombing, the children of the Black Panthers, and the grandchildren of Malcolm. Far from "lost" they are probably the most aware generation since Nat Turner's; they are not so much "lost" as they are "mislaid," and discarded by this increasingly racist system that undermines their inherent worth.

They are **all** potential revolutionaries, with the historic power to transform our dull realities.

If they are " lost"— then, **find** them.

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Can a Black Person Be A Conscientious Objector?

By Tahan Jones

I am an African-American man who enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps when I was 17. Last year I filed for a Conscientious Objector discharge from the military. I want to draw the clearest possible picture of the reasons why I took that action and what it has been like for me. I especially want to reach young African-Americans who might be thinking about joining the military.

Last winter I spoke at high schools, churches, universities, and rallies in the San Francisco Bay Area about my moral opposition to war. I found that most people do not know the correct meaning of Conscientious Objector (C.O.). A C.O. is a person who rejects war as a means of solving differences between nations. This can be based on religious, moral, ethical, political, or any other beliefs that would prevent a person from killing another. The individual may adopt these beliefs years after signing the Enlistment Agreement when entering the service.

When people apply for a C.O. discharge, they are confronted with a review process influenced by a society in which violence is institutionalized and, in the case of black applicants, has a racist attitude. One discovers that the military has a narrow idea of what constitutes a conscientious objector. There is a biased perception that a C.O. is white and well-to-do, educated and intellectual, a complete pacifist with a strong background in a religious group or particular body of moral thought, and is gentle, sensitive, and naive.

The key to winning C.O. status is in how well an individual can express him or herself. People whose education was impaired by budget cuts and high college tuition may find that lack of writing or speaking skills is an impassable obstacle to getting a C.O. discharge. The burden of proof that one is sincere and that one's views are deeply held is on the applicant.

When I discovered that I would have to write an essay explaining my beliefs about war, I was afraid. I knew my writing skills were not up to the challenge of writing an essay about my views opposing war. Friends came to my aid with the grammar, but only I could express my feeling toward war and why I could not kill another human being. My C.O. statement reflected rage toward our government and the society in which I live.

Political beliefs can also be an obstacle. The Uniform Code of Military Justice states that political discontentment can be in a claim, as long as it is not the only reason for objecting to war. Yet a C.O. application can be denied on the grounds that he is motivated by "political beliefs" or opposition to certain wars, called selective objection.

The hierarchy in the military affects the decisions. The overwhelming majority of officers in all branches of the military are

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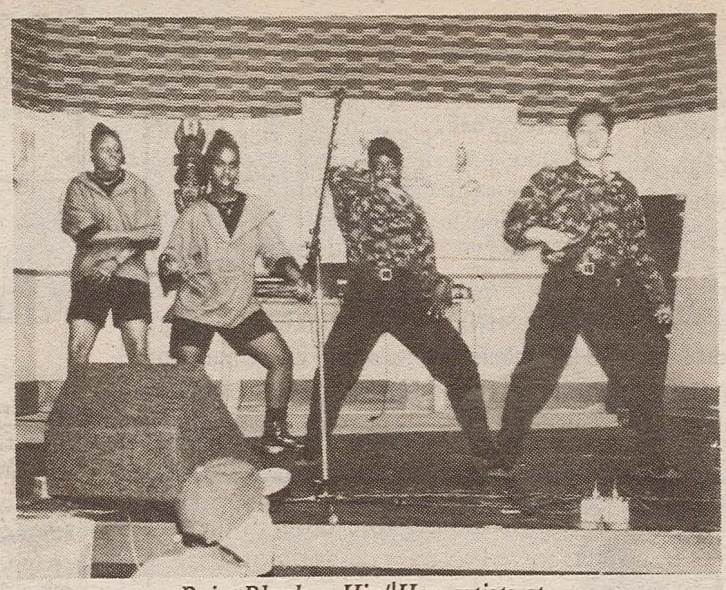
Commemoration Committee Celebrates Malcolm X Birthday

On 17 May 1992, The Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party sponsored a birthday celebration in honor of El Hajj-Malik Shabbaz (Malcolm X) at the Black Repertory Theater last May. The evening was oriented toward the theme of unity, and continuing the legacy of the principles exposed by Malcolm X and the Black Panther Party. One year after the death of Malcolm X, the Black Panther Party emerged with a program addressing the oppressive conditions in which he sought to address.

"In the wake of the Rodney King incident," said Melvin Dickson, Chairman of the Commemoration Committee "It's important now more than ever to celebrate the legacy of our struggle, learn from our mistakes and keep moving forward."

"Just as the Black Panther Party in the Mid '60s and early '70s sought to eliminate oppression and economic exploitation of black, poor and working communities in the U.S. and around the globe, the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party goals to build a strong, unified network of suport and participation in the fight for justice and the ability of the human race to maintain and attain fulfillment of their basic needs, currently denied to more than 63 million U.S. residents of all races and colors," said Dickson, a leading member of the BPP. "Today our community is worse off than it was in 1966 when the BPP was founded. Today, unemployment, homelessness and lack of health care are on the rise, therefore, a fighting-organization is what's needed."

Speeches by CCBPP member Vincent Gordon and CCBPP Executive Committee member Steve McCutchen, a frequent contributor to the original Black Panther Intercommunal News Service, related what Malcolm X meant to the Black community and all other oppressed people. Leslie Johnson spoke on the behalf of the International Campaign to Free Geronimo Pratt, about the continuing effort to build a mass movement to end the injustice that has been inflicted on Geronimo, legendary Black Panther leader and political prisoner, framed by the F.B.I. to prevent his efforts to liberate his people.



David Martinez

Point Blank -- Hip/|Hop artists at Malcolm X Commemorative Celebration.

The program included performances by local rap artists such as Point Blank, 3D Nation, The 2WO Dominaterz, Kilo Mar, Venamous II, The Coup and Shadow Daddy.

The CCBPP was originally formed in August 1990, to organize a Unity Rally in West Oakland in honor of the late Dr. Huey P. Newton and the Black Panther Party, then began a thrust towards building a grassroots movement. The first program was the *Commemorator* newspaper followed by a number of community activities (local talent shows, speaking engagements and commemorative events) on behalf of the black community followed. "The CCBPP has the historic obligation to continue the struggle for power on behalf of our community, said Dickson. The main difference today is that fascism is unmasked and moving to disenfranchise the entire working class."

The Commemoration Committee also used the event to publicize the campaign to reaffirm and reestablish the basic principles of the Black Panther Party, as articulated in the Ten-Point Platform and Program, which, according to the Committee, is more relevant today than ever. Ideas were also put forth about practical programs which could begin to generate the kind of unity needed to overcome the difficult problems facing our people and community.

Outside the theater, there were tables set up for people to join the volunteer effort to bring about positive solutions to the oppressive economic conditions and institutionalized racism which gave rise to the L.A. rebellion.

The evening concluded with the performance of an excerpt from "The Meeting", a play envisioning a dialogue between Malcolm X and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

News Briefs

ASSEMBLY BILL LIMITS POLICE SUPERVISORS

The California State Assembly voted 69-4 last August to pass AB 2067 sponsored by Richard Floyd (D-Gardena), which would limit high ranking police officials' ability to question the actions of their subordinate officers. According to some opponents of the measure, this would make it easier for officers on duty to abuse people's rights under color of law.

The bill, backed by the California Correctional Peace Officers Union (which makes large political contributions to campaigns of many state legislators) was opposed only by Republicans Frazee, Frizelle, Harvey and Knowles. It was opposed in the Assembly Ways and Means Committee only by Frizelle and Assemblywoman Cathie Wright (R-Simi Valley).

If passed by the Senate, AB 2067 would also prohibit law enforcement agencies from keeping records of histories of previous misconduct, thus making it impossible to document patterns of repetitive practices of misconduct and police brutality. The Senate Judiciary Committee postponed hearing the bill August 12, and no action has been taken on it since. This bill is based on the historically documented presumption that high ranking police officials and government officials are in the practice of scapegoating individual officers assigned to enforce policies which maintain conditions of poverty in low-income communities, for acts of brutality which, in fact, the officers carry out in the normal course of duty.

Miami Homeless Sue To Live In Public

Even before Hurricane Andrew increased their numbers by 250,000, homeless people in the City of Miami went to federal court, armed with a novel suit that challenges ordinances against living in public places.

"We're saying that you can't make it criminal to be homeless," said Benjamin Waxman, lead attorney for the city's homeless population, then estimated at 5,000 to 7,000. "We're talking about sleeping, eating, standing, congregating, bathing and doing all the kinds of things that you and I do in our homes and never think twice about," Waxman said.

The ACLU seeks a ruling from U.S. District Judge C. Clyde Atkins that city ordinances prohibiting sleeping in public places and use of public parks through the night are unconstitutional "as applied in these circumstances."

Laws which technically do not define homelessness as a crime but make anyone in a homeless condition into a criminal date back to the "freeing of the serfs" in Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries. Hundreds of thousands were thrown off the land and out of work and in the name of "freedom" left to starve in the countryside or, as depicted in the Robin Hood movies, turn to crime as a means to survive. Many black families were similarly forced out of their homes under sharecropping contracts and forced to migrate north or west because their newly homeless condition was illegal.

One crime, most prevalent among the homeless of Europe during that period was to be take food from the King's forest, which was any forest. This period gave birth to the Vagabond Laws, the precursor of our Vagrancy Laws.

A classic example is the law against sleeping under a bridge, which "applies equally to the rich and the poor." A law against sleeping in a park or public place such as the one under consideration in Miami is a law that will be prejudicial in it's application, because the wealthy have no need to violate it. Though is undoubtedly will be said that the law applies to everyone, it will only be enforced against those will have been forced to the condition of having to seek refuge under a bridge or in a park or in a forest.

Under this ordinance, Miami would now have the obligation of arresting over 22,000 of its population, or 250,000 in the general vicinity, left homeless by Hurricane Andrew. Already applicants for aid are being asked for "I.D." who barely have the clothes on their backs, if that.

Portions of this article were taken from the June 15, 1992 edition of the ***San Francisco Examiner.***

Vincent Gordon

A poor family in South Central L.A. seeks a better future through organization.

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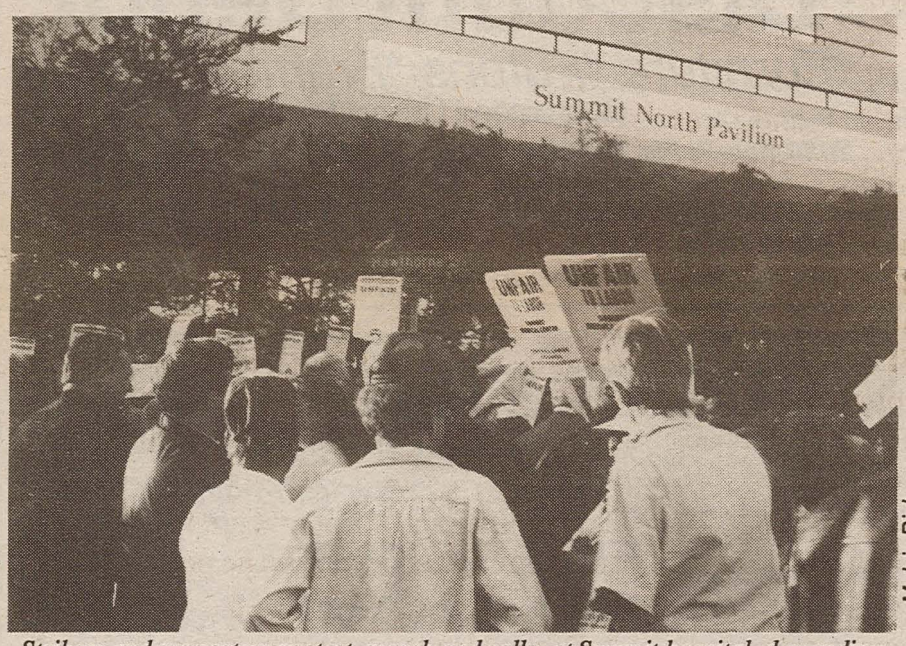
Summit Strikers Interviewed

Oakland — June 3 The Commemorator visited the picket line at Summit Medical Center, where first five then six unions went on strike for the right to support each other's struggles. We talked to two workers.

Male worker: The strike is over the sympathy clause. All contracts, all five unions plus CNA (RNs), want to be able to sympathize with the other unions, to support one another. And they don't want that. They feel that if there is a conflict with one union and that union walks out, then the other unions cannot sympathize, and if we did, we would be fired. Then if you don't come to work and you could have a reason for this or that, they could say, "Well, I don't think that's true," and if you haven't got proof and because of the strike they can terminate you. That's what it is: we all want to be together, these unions, so that we can maintain our rights and our benefits and what-nots—everything that's connected with the contracts. So they want to separate us so they can pick us off one at a time. They want to strip us of our benefits, something that we have already earned. What they wanna do is just break us eventually. So that's the whole issue.

Now the other part of the contract is all right. We agreed to it. The monies. We agreed to that, plus our benefits. That's no problem. But they will take it away next time if this sympathy thing is taken away. They gonna come right back at you. You know that. If they don't like the way you talk or the way you look, they can dismiss you. And if you ain't got no union, they not gonna let you build no seniority. I heard that talk already that they're not gonna allow you. Like people over here [Providence before the merger] with over twenty years. They say they're not gonna allow that any more. I got 22 1/2 myself. I know other people who got 35. One brother, a technologist, he got 37. But they aren't gonna allow that to happen. You're approaching twenty years, and you know they aren't gonna allow you to get twenty. They don't want you reaching twenty any more. This is what they wanna cut out.



Melvin Dickson

Strikers and supporters protest, march and rally at Summit hospital, demanding managment not to take back hard-earn sympathy clause, the heart of the strike.

Now over here at Providence, before the merger, we had a sympathy clause. And it was no problem. Didn't nobody wanna strike. It wasn't ever mentioned. It was just something there. But at Merritt they never allowed it. They didn't have it in their contract. But see when the merger occurred, they wanted everything their way. In other words, they wanna retain everything that was connected with Merritt. They didn't want to retain anything that had something to do with Providence. The contract was bad, less money. Like now the pay is different. If you work at North Pavilion, which was Merritt, you get paid less. Now people working here [South Pavilion], which was Providence, you get paid more.

On the first of May, Providence side had a five percent raise. In other words, fifteen percent across the board for three years, five percent every year. The five percent raise was only for the people who were working on this side. Now our people that were transferred to the other side when the merger came, they didn't even get it. If you were a Providence worker and was moved over there, you don't get it. Only the people who work in this building got that five percent raise.

Commemorator: When did the merger take place?

March 1. This past March.

Commemorator: So all this is a fallout behind the merger?

Ex-Providence is called South Pavilion and ex-Merritt over there is called North Pavilion, and ex-Peralta down the street is called West Pavilion.

Male worker: You know, Peralta and Merritt, they merged about three or four years ago.

Female worker: '82, ten years ago.

Male worker: '82! Okay, correct me. Thank you.

Female worker: Yeah, they been that way a long time. And you know what the people at Peralta said, the people that are still over there? They said, all they did was get sucked dry. They just sucked them dry. Now they said, now we [Merritt management] gonna suck Providence dry. And that's exactly what they done.

Commemorator: Merritt sucked them dry?

Woman: Yeah, absolutely.

Commemorator: You work at Providence also?

Female worker: Yeah, I work in nuclear medicine.

Commemorator: What are they doing bringing in these scab nurses? Where do they come from?

Female worker: All over, Buffalo, Montana, Iowa, and they're paying some of them fifty dollars an hour.

And you know what? They're giving all these bonuses and stuff. And these poor fools that work here and are crossing the picket line, are they getting bonuses? Naw, no.

If in fact they crush the unions, then they gonna tell these fools that went across and everybody else, "Hey, look what the union's done to you. They cost us so much money, we gonna have to take away half your benefits." And are they gonna have anything to say about it? No, because they crushed the unions who bargained for them for this contract.

We are working without a contract. The contract was in motion. So we struck because they couldn't agree on the sympathy clause in the contract. Therefore, these people who are working are without a contract. Now the union ain't gonna be able to bargain for them. They will go back to the drawing board. They are likely to say to everybody, "Oh, this is a new establishment, everybody's seniority starts from March 1, when the corporation was founded. You ain't got no more then five weeks per year vacation because you been here five years. You work for Summit Hospital. You don't work for Merritt anymore. This is a new corporation. We don't have to pay your medical benefits. We don't have to pay you diddley." And all those poor fools who has gone across the line and help support this bad thing are just helping in their own exploitation. Like people been doing for year after year. Women do it. Black people do it. Minorities do it all the time, through misplaced loyalties, misplaced information, or whatever it is.

Federal Mediation And Conciliation Service

United States Government

RECOMMENDATION FOR SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTE BETWEEN SUMMIT MEDICAL CENTER AND ITS STRIKING UNIONS

ON THE ISSUE OF "SYMPATHY STRIKES"

The medical center, the union, the employee members of the union recognize their obligations to maintain services to the patients and to provide health care services to the community. There shall be no strikes, lockouts, or other interruptions of work during the life of this agreement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it shall not be deemed a violation of this agreement for the union to respect the lawful, primary picket line of another union representing the hospital's employees provided the following procedures have been exhausted by the bargaining union.

STEP 1

90 days before contract expiration, one or both parties notifies the other in writing of request to renegotiate contract.

STEP 2

60 days before contract expiration, one or both parties notifies the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service of contract bargaining; therefore a potential labor dispute.

STEP 3

Not less than 30 days before contract expiration, F.M.C.S. shall have the authority to activate (or not activate) the following procedure:

a) The Federal Mediator shall select one of the following persons (list three or four agreed to names) to act as chairperson of a Board of Inquiry to hear and make advisory recommendations for settlement on all unresolved issues in bargaining. In addition to the neutral chairperson, the hospital and affected union shall each appoint one person to the Board of Inquiry.

b) The Board of Inquiry shall adopt its own rules of procedure and shall have the authority to convene meeting of the principal parties and of all affected unions as the Board deems appropriate.

c) The Board of Inquiry shall submit its report, including recommendations for settlement, to the parties and the Federal Mediator at least 15 days before the contract expiration.

d) The Board of Inquiry may make its report and recommendations public, at the Board's discretion.

e) Costs of the Board's Inquiry process shall be borne equally by the parties.

STEP 4

Subsequent to receiving the Board of Inquiry report and recommendations, all involved unions must comply with the NLRA Section 8 (g) 10 day strike notice, and shall be responsive to meeting called by FMCS under the law.

Oakland Police Department: A History Of Racism And Brutality

Below is a list of some recent instances of police brutality, killings, and harassment in Oakland. While reading, keep in mind that this is only a partial listing of some of the most publicized cases of the last two years. Many people who are abused by the police feel too helpless or intimidated to report their experiences to anyone. The list covers only the years 1989-91. The names of individual officers in the cases listed below have been REMOVED.

This is important because individual police officers are not the problem; demeaning and unconstitutional laws, the class bias with which they are enforced, the racialist and oppressive application of the laws police are charged with enforcing, makes brutality in enforcement inevitable. These laws often strike at the person's very means of survival and so must be enforced brutally. Those who make these laws fully understand the level of force it will take to enforce them as poverty grows across our nation.

Laws are alleged to apply equally and their punishment issued out equally among all citizens. However, the law that says people can't sleep in the park or under a bridge is a law applied differently in its enforcement. A citizen who didn't need to sleep in the park would respond to that officer, attempting to enforce that unconstitutional law, differently than someone who had no where else to sleep.

The Oakland Police Department's history of violence goes back to its formation. For many years, most were hired from southern U.S. communities and police departments with a history of racist law enforcement practices. The victims of police brutality in Oakland are almost exclusively people of color, especially African-Americans, while the majority of Oakland Police officers are white. Several of these cases involved blatant racial slurs and intimidation.

JANUARY 1989 — An OPD officer was charged with sexual battery and rape of an Oakland woman. The DA later dropped the charges even though she claimed to believe the survivor's story. The accused officer is still on the force.

JANUARY 1990 — Martin Trahan, 39, was killed by an illegal choke hold when police broke up an argument he was having with his wife.

JANUARY 1990 — Isaac Howard and Michael Bass were handcuffed and severely beaten after police responded to a disturbance in the apartment complex Howard managed. Neither was arrested nor charged with any crime.

JUNE 1, 1990 — Barbara Dean, a school psychologist, was jogging in a park near her house when police jumped her, put her in a choke hold, an arm lock, and beat her head against their van. She was verbally harassed when she got to jail. Dean appeared in court one month later to find no record of her arrest and no charges filed against her.

JULY 1, 1990 — Eric James Smith, 19 was beaten several times over the head, forced to the ground and then beaten some more by the OPD.

JULY 3, 1990 — Jermaine Adams, 18, rape suspect, was shot in the back of the head and killed while running from police. Adams was shot and killed by an OPD officer who is still a member of the force.

OCTOBER 16, 1990 — Darrel Hampton, a nationally known girl's track coach and activities director at West Oakland's ACORN housing project, was struck repeatedly in the face and stomach and pushed down a flight of stairs by officers from the later-disbanded Oakland Housing Authority police. His crime? Hampton, a Police Activities League volunteer, had asked the officers not to speed through the housing complex because there were many children present.

OCTOBER 29, 1990 — Michael Moseley, 21, a "drug suspect" was beaten over the head 15-20 times by police batons on Market Street. Police produced no proof that Moseley was doing anything illegal, and this kind of beating causes permanent brain damage.

MAY 15, 1991 — Marguerite Martin, a visitor from North Carolina, was beaten by an officer for refusing to sign a jaywalking ticket.

JUNE 15, 1991 — Three men, including Robert Woods-Jones, son of prominent civic activist and Laney college professor Dezie Woods-Jones, were brutally beaten with no provocation by police at Jack London Square.

JULY 1991 — Three youth were beaten on their heads, handcuffed, and threatened at gunpoint for distributing flyers on Webster Street.

JULY 1991 — Michael Seymour, who had recently won an earlier brutality case against OPD, was badly beaten by officers at 84th Ave. and Dowling St. Seymour suffered a broken jaw among other injuries.

SUMMER 1991 — Darnell Livingstone, a community drug counselor, was beaten and cursed by police who claimed he was a drug dealer because he is black and wore "lots of jewelry and a beeper."

SUMMER 1991 — Jabari Butler and a friend were handcuffed and bashed with a billy club by OPD officers with no provocation.

OCTOBER 17, 1991 — Tupac (aka 2PAC) Shakur, popular rapper associated with Digital Underground, was choked and beaten to unconsciousness by officers who were writing him a jaywalking ticket. The officers used racial slurs and told Shakur that he was "going to learn his place in Oakland."

DECEMBER 12, 1991 — A 15 year-old Far West High School student was repeatedly punched and choked by a police officer who tried to stop her from jaywalking on the 5200 block of Broadway. She was treated at Children's Hospital for facial injuries.

FEBRUARY 1992 — An OPD officer was charged with kidnapping and rape. Prosecutors and witnesses alleged that he had raped several women while on duty, including seven prostitutes whom he assumed would be afraid to come forward with their stories. That case is still pending.

Oakland police brutality claims went up 50% in 1991. Police violence is increasing nationwide and statewide from LA to Alameda. Through their silence, the city and police chief George Hart condone and encourage brutal and racist behavior by the police. The only established way to file a complaint against the police is through the OPD-controlled Citizen's Complaint Board (CCB). Although more than 700 complaints have been filed with CCB since 1980, officers have only been disciplined in eight cases!

Denver Public Library

African American, John Taylor and Ute friend. Taylor married a Ute woman, Kitty Cloud of the Ute Nation, in 1894.

The African-Indigenous Political Heritage

by Vincent Gordon

In this year of the 500th Anniversary of the invasion of the Western Hemisphere by Christopher Columbus, the question of race in relation to population of the North American continent is in the public eye.

The ruling class has always sought to overcome movements of colored and oppressed people by pitting one group against the other, particularly when its survival is at stake. Provoking division and competition is the oldest trick in the book used by a minority ruling class to maintain control over a majority of oppressed and exploited peoples. In the Los Angeles protests, for instance, the hostility between black youth and Korean shop owners, both struggling to survive in a failing economy, was allowed to foment. In the aftermath of the uprising, the government's solution to Black-Korean race relations was to employ gang members in Korean-owned businesses, establishing an employee-employer relationship, which is inherently antagonistic.

During the rebellion in Los Angeles, the rank and file soldier, having surrendered all authority over his life and principles to his oppressor, was told to occupy his own community and shoot his own kind to suppress the anger and rage of Black, Latino and others rising up.

These are the Buffalo Soldiers of the 90s. The original Buffalo soldiers of the 1870s fought on the side of the government against Indigenous Peoples, and have been glorified in the annals of U.S. history. Today, roughly 60% of the U.S armed forces are African-Americans, most of whom are there because, given the lack of decent employment, the army has become one of the few viable options for many black youth to survive.

The hidden Black-Indian heritage and legacy of resistance is not commonly found in our history books. In the book "Black Indians" William Katz describes the historical process by which certain tribes and groupings of darker skinned Indians assimilated with African slave populations. With the enactment of the Indian Removal Act of 1830 (The Trail of Tears) under the administration of Martin Van Buren, the

The Ruling class has always sought to overcome movements of colored and oppressed people by pitting one group against the other.

five "civilized tribes," Cherokee, Chickasaw, Seminole, Choctaw and Creeks, were forced to migrate from their tribal homelands in the Southeastern states. As these tribes were uprooted by federal armies, many died and a whole way of life was destroyed. For the Cherokee, it was a trail of blood. Their homes, livestock, and tools were burned as they were driven west by federal troops under the command of General Winfield Scott and president Van Buren, who assured Congress that their removal "had the happiest effects...the Cherokees have emigrated without apparent reluctance."

Those who survived were forced to settle on reservations in the plains of Arkansas and Oklahoma. The tribal social unit was transformed, under the direction of federal agents, to a plantation system in order to survive in the capitalist market economy. Tribes were forced to take African slaves because as Elias Rector, Superintendent of Southern Indian Affairs in 1859, explained, it tended to "civilize them."

Indigenous nations soon became divided in privilege and class. A small fraction of each tribe became incorporated into a ruling elite, sold on the economic opportunities of such a venture. Privilege became established by skin color with light skinned and mixed Indians at the top and the "Full Bloods", Africans and dark skinned natives together in bondage. This was not, however, easily accomplished. The use of slave labor and human bondage was not within the cultural character of native people. Members of indigenous nations were noted for treating their slaves with "generosity, fairness and a level of equality toward their slaves"(Katz,p.136). In 1853, a German artist named Mollhausen wrote:

These slaves receive from their Indian masters more Christian treatment than among Christian whites... the Negro is regarded as a companion and helper, to whom thanks and kindness are due when he exerts himself for the welfare of the household.

Massive rebellions of African and Indigenous slaves began to surge across the southern states.

This situation was unacceptable to neighboring slave masters and government agents, because it posed a threat to their ability to control their own African slaves. U.S. "Indian agents", such as Choctaw agent Douglas Cooper, decided that personnel should be sent to live in their villages, to teach the "Indians" how to beat and whip their slaves in order to "control matters".

This move, however had the opposite effect. Massive rebellions of African and Indigenous slaves began to surge across the southern states. On November 15, 1842, an uprising occurred on the property of the Vann family near Weber Falls in which Black men and women, Creek and Cherokee slaves locked their masters in cabins, seized guns, horses and provisions and headed south to Mexico. It is said that Black Seminoles were likely to have sparked the rebellion.

Uprisings of this nature continued throughout the nineteenth century. A unique heritage of Black-Indians thus emerged, as these groupings inter-married and later settled in ghettoes and reservations throughout the south. The relationship between indigenous people and African Americans, however, has not always been friendly. As members of both cultures attempted to settle and integrate, different levels of co-optation by the power structure have often pitted these groups against each other. The Buffalo Soldiers, for instance, members of the ninth and tenth cavalry and twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth infantry regiments, comprised the "U.S. Colored Troops." Ex-Slaves who were freed from one form of bondage were incorporated into another. These troops, known to be some of the fiercest in battle, were used to settle the Western frontier by

AIM (American Indian Movement) has become victim to similar tactics of repression as the Black Panther Party, both disrupted by the F.B.I. 's COINTELPRO

fighting off the last roving bands of indigenous rebels in the 1870s and '80s. Though they were treated with unusually harsh discipline by bigoted officers and subjected to substandard facilities and poor food rations, they were often decorated with Congressional medals of honor for their bravery in fighting the "Indians".

The African-American and Indigenous communities have a particular heritage of resistance which has carried through to modern times. The FBI has treated Organizations representing Native and African Americans struggle for self-determination as a threat. AIM (American Indian Movement) has become victim to similar tactics of repression as the Black Panther Party, both disrupted by the F.B.I.'s COINTELPRO operation.

Although native Americans are often assumed to be a very tiny percentage of the people now inhabiting North America, this too is a matter of government definition. To be officially "recognized" by the U.S. government as native American, a person must "prove" they have a minimum of 25% pure native ancestry. Whole tribes whose members fail this test have been declared "extinct" — although still functioning as a tribe. The fact that escaped slaves were adopted by the Seminole tribe and intermarried, the pressure of sterilization campaigns inflicted on native women, which led many men to marry non-native wives, is not accounted for, in the "official" externally imposed definition of "native."

This process of government definition of who is a native American, has allowed the government to abandoned treaties with various tribes on the grounds that since the tribes no longer exist, the treaties don't either and the tribal land is then taken by the government.

(Much of the information in the above text is borrowed from the book "Black Indians. A Hidden Heritage" by William Loren Katz, Ethrac Publications, Macmillan Publishing Co., NY, 1986).

Lakota Woman

Mary Ellen Crow Dog

(The following is an excerpt from the book "Lakota Woman" by Mary Crow Dog and Richard Erdoes, Harper Collins pub.,1990)

I am Mary Brave Bird. After I had my baby during the siege of Wounded Knee they gave me a special name – Ohitika Win, Brave Woman, singing brave-heart songs for me. I am a woman of the Red Nation, a Sioux woman. That is not easy.

I had my first baby during a firefight, with the bullets crashing through one wall and coming out through the other. When my newborn son was only a day old and the marshals really opened up upon us, I wrapped him in a blanket and ran for it. We had to hit the dirt a couple of times, I shielding the baby with my body, praying, "It's alright if I die , but please let him live."

When I came out of Wounded Knee I was not even healed up , but they put me in jail at Pine Ridge and took my baby away. I could not nurse. My breasts were swollen up and grew hard as rocks, hurting badly. In 1975, the feds put the muzzles of their M-16s against my head, threatening to blow me away. It's hard being an Indian woman.

My best friend was Annie Mae Aquash, a young, strong-hearted woman from the Micmac tribe with beautiful children. It is not always wise for an Indian woman to come on too strong. Annie Mae was found dead in the snow at the bottom of a ravine on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The police said that she had died of exposure, but there was a .38-caliber slug in her head. The FBI cut off her hands and sent them to Washington for fingerprint identification, hands that helped my baby come into the world.

My sister-in-law, Delphine, a good woman who had lived a hard life, was also found dead in the snow, the tears frozen on her face. A drunken man had beaten her, breaking one of her arms and legs, leaving her helpless in a blizzard to die.

My sister Barbara went to a government hospital in Rosebud to have her baby and when she came out of anesthesia found that she had been sterilized against her will. The baby only lived for two hours, and she had wanted so much to have children. No, it isn't easy.

When I was a small girl at the St.Francis Boarding school, the Catholic sisters would take a buggy whip to us for what they called "disobedience." At age ten I could drink and hold a pint of whiskey. At age twelve the nuns beat me for "being too free with my body." All I had been doing was holding hands with a boy. At age fifteen I was raped. If you plan to be born, make sure you are born white and male.

It is not the big, dramatic things so much that get us down, but just being Indian...

COINTELPRO

Continued from page 3

claiming that starting on May 1, 1992 teams of Panthers were going to commit minor traffic violations in plain view of marked police cars. When the police pulled over the car, those inside the car would open fire on the cops — or, in another scenario, a trailing car would come up from the rear and shoot the cops from behind.

The Post article was written purportedly to report on the "news" that the New York City police department, along with others on the Eastern seaboard, were all investigating whether this could be true and warnings had been issued across the board to police precincts to watch out.

"The Rodney King beating acquittal and its aftermath put fear into the authorities that it would spawn a whole new movement of committed activists who would follow the police and take video pictures of their actions."

Gordon who recently spent a few weeks walking the streets of South/Central Los Angeles, assisting with volunteer community efforts to aid low-income, mostly Hispanic families, suffering famine in the period after businesses were looted and closed, and 20,000 were arrested and detained for weeks or months. (One in four in the area remains on welfare. Hunger and homelessness stands at unprecedented levels in an area where 33% of all residents lived below the poverty line before the Rodney King verdicts.) Said Gordon on his return, "It is no coincidence that this story appeared when it did on the heels of the Rodney King verdict when the police, the National Guard and the U.S. military were deployed in force to suppress an entire population, which prepared the public for massive arrests and elimination of constitutional rights at the highest state policy levels. Putting out a scare story that some formulation of the Black Panther Party was on the rampage could do nothing other than give the police an excuse to violate more rights on the basis of threat or emergency."

Melvin Dickson, Chair of the Commemoration Committee, assessed, "The Rodney King beating acquittal and its aftermath put fear into the authorities that it would spawn a whole new movement of committed activists who would follow the police and take video pictures of their actions. This lie planted in the paper puts people on notice that they better watch out or they might get shot by mistake if they get too close, and if the police think you're a 'Panther.'"

Dickson noted also that Heidenberg mischaracterized the history of Black Panther Party practice when he ascribed like methods of killing cops to the original Panthers.

"Officer Heidenberg's characterization distorts the facts of Black Panther Party activities. The Bay Area Black Panther Party, under the leadership of Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, began its practice as an organization by following police cars around in Oakland, California, in particular, such that when the officers pulled over a black motorist, the Panthers in the other car would step out of their car, take a bullhorn, and advise the black motorist of their constitutional rights. The tactic proved effective in undermining the ability of the police to utilize police brutality upon Blacks in the area, let alone to railroad them when it came to their rights upon stop and potential arrest. While demonstrating the Panther's determination to protect The public from the government which serves as an instrument of their oppression. The tactic ceased when the State Assembly passed the Mulford Bill in 1967. The Bill, a direct response to the Party's Police Patrol, made it illegal to carry firearmd in the open, which previously was legal for citizens."

Dickson noted this was an example of a captive press acting in concert with government police agents to subvert the will of the people. "Years ago, no self-respecting news service would simply print police reports without ascertaining their validity. This report was not printed until eight days after the alleged threat and no supporting information was ever garnered, indicating its spurious nature."

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CARRY MAJOR BRANDS

A R C H I V E S

Excerpts: George Jackson on Reform and Revolution

Editor's note: In spite of a black Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-Of-Staff, a high profile black Supreme Court Justice, and countless black Mayors and other elected officials, the standard of living for most African Americans continues to drop, while the rates of incarceration, death by murder, homelessness and infant mortality rise. In the following archives article, we recall George Jackson, one of the martyrs of our movement, who cautioned us against accepting the cooptation which has been offered in place of real change.

Fighting racism does not mean one cannot be proud of one's heritage and defend oneself. Only that one does not attack another on that basis

Some have labelled the black urban male as an endangered species; that means we must band together to seek the safety of numbers together with sisters and brothers of all races and creeds, here and abroad.

To allow ourselves to seek individual solutions while our brothers and sisters suffer is irresponsible. To buy into government funded or sponsored programs will be no more successful now than it has been in the past. Serious and responsible community leaders must seek methods of genuine change without allowing excuses for violence by the monopolists in our society and without exhausting the activism and energetic pursuit of lasting change by the people.

To do this we must first resist the bribes offered some of us to betray or isolate ourselves from the rest of our sisters and brothers

The great majority of blacks reject racism. They have never found it expedient, wise or honorable to take on the characteristics of the enemy. I think it is vitally important to stress that for blacks a concern for the "survival" of the race is not, patently not, definable as racism... (Blood In My Eye, 1972),

the late George Jackson, Field Marshall
Black Panther Party

During the nationalist period of the collective oppressed mentality promoted by the establishment, the movement is frozen, static. This is the level of development favored by the oppressor, the artless empty ideals of the pseudo-nation, love and respect for a flag, a nationalistic song or beat, the fervent belief in a bond or organization which arises out of a thwarted longing for real community. The establishment does everything in its power to ensure that revolutionary rage is redirected into empty outlets which provide pressure releases for desires that could become dangerous if allowed to progress... (Blood In My Eye, 1972)

The co-optation thing is a mechanism of the American brand of fascism. We have to understand that first.

In essence, how it works is that with each group, each social unit larger than two, the powers-that-be will approach the element that's guiding that social unit, and attempt in some way to co-opt it. There are a thousand ways of approaching it: playing on loyalties; or the money thing, the money syndrome, we've had that trained into us from infancy; or they'll attempt to show us the futility of our actions; and then perhaps, if that doesn't work, they'll explain to us how actually our goals are the same as theirs and that they're not such bad guys after all.

But, it's worked. It's worked in the past. You've heard the stories, the tales about White America and the establishment not being able to deal with Black nationalism. Well, they have been. They've built foundations, you know, the Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and so forth. They bought them off.

How do we stop those things from happening? As far as I'm concerned our dialectic, our intentions, our goals are so mutually exclusive to those of our opposition, that I can't see anything we can find, anything to agree on. We have to stop it right from the beginning.

In other words, no acceptance of tokens, none whatsoever, in the building of the People's world. We do it on our own. We do it with our own facilities and to say that we can't do it, to say that we don't have the personnel, that we don't have the financial means, is just like saying that producers can't produce, that breadmakers can't make bread.

(Taken from Analyzing The Correct Methods Of Combatting Fascism — The Black Panther, Oct. 16, 1976.

The Black Panther Party On Trade Unionism

Excerpt from a speech by Ray "Masai" Hewitt
Minister of Education, Black Panther Party, to the Revolutionary Labor Conference (Date, 1969)

(Editor's note: Historically, the labor movement has played a leading role in the struggle against economic deprivation and government oppression. An examination of the traditional labor movement in the U.S. in the latter half of the 20th century, shows it has proven ineffective in this task. The difficulty lay not in the subjective lack of motivation of the labor leaders but in the objective condition of illegality surrounding labor organization. Since the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, which outlawed sit-ins, mass picketing, secondary strikes, hot cargo agreements and boycotts as well as communist leadership in trade unions, labor organizations have found their prior ability to represent workers virtually eliminated. With nearly 2 decades of economic decline within the U.S., 1) fewer workers are working and 2) fewer are organized or organizable into traditional trade unions.

A viable alternative to this situation is the method of strata organizing, which combines labor and community organizing and has been used by organizing drives of service workers, domestic workers, farm workers (of all ethnic groups, races) and others not covered by labor law nationwide. (See interview with Clovis Bordeaux, page 11.)

The COMMEMORATOR presents the following excerpts from a speech by the late Ray "Masai" Hewitt, member of the BPP Central Committee and the Minister of Education. The speech provides an example of the historic concerns of the BPP which the method of strata organizing answers.)

...The Black Panther Party is definitely willing to work in cooperation to help put into practice anything that will take the workers to the conscious level and organize economic and political struggle. We're not talking about rampant unionism, or separatism by occupation, by race, by salary. We're talking about making the workers a political tool, a real political force because the student movement gets a hell of a lot of publicity, what they like to call the militants and radicals and the so-called black militant movement gets a hell of a lot of publicity. But it should be clear to anybody who's done a little research and has a reasonable amount of practice that only the workers can free the workers. And that to do this the workers will have to become a strong political force with a party based on correct revolutionary principles to guide them.

Now the vanguard position of any political struggle is not something that's bestowed by the heavens, or snatched up by some lucky opportunists. The vanguard position is objectively earned through struggle and usually organizations or people who earned the vanguard position, only find out about it when they realize that they're wearing out the steps in the jails and the courts. The jailhouse doors are getting worn from slamming and opening and slamming and opening. There won't be any alternative for the workers except to become a strong, militant revolutionary political force. The students cannot free the workers, the workers cannot free the students. Black folks cannot free White folks, White folks cannot free Black folks.

The Black Panther Party has very clear understanding of this concept. And we say that for all the workers the first point of demarcation which seems to have been forgotten in this country, is that there has to be a correct recognition that the primary struggle is the class struggle. Once this line of demarçation has been departed from, the workers usually become turned on each other, or they become in many cases the champions of reform. With the type of unions we've had in this country, its been understandable why this weird phenomenon has come about.

Another thing that we would like to make clear in the very beginning is that we do recognize the need for a degree of self-determination, of self-rule for militant Black workers. This is not in any way to endorse racism. The Party has a very clear line on that point. But there is a need among Blacks, who are the most oppressed and exploited people within the confines of this Babylon they call America to have self-rule, this is not independent rule, independent of others, located geographically together, but self-rule. And there's also an equal need for these Blacks to be in a very close working coalition with their class brothers, regardless of whether you're for or against intermarriage, whether you want to live in Beverly Hills or Watts or Oakland or Washington, D.C., it doesn't make any difference...

IN SEARCH OF THE TRUTH ABOUT ENTERPRISE ZONES

(Editor's note:) We have all recently been bombarded by a media blitz extolling the promises of jobs and economic salvation that are to come through enterprise zones. From Jerry Brown to George Bush, politicians are pushing the zones as a panacea to urban ills. However, growing opposition to enterprise zones has been given little or no voice. The Commemorator interviewed one of the leading opponents to the enterprise zone program in the Bay Area, Clovis Bordeaux, Operations Manager of Western Service Workers Association. The following contains excerpts from that interview.

THE L.A./"SUPER ZONE"

COMMEMORATOR: What is WSWA?

BORDEAUX: WSWA is a free and voluntary association of service workers, unemployed people, disabled, welfare recipients and others, organizing to change the conditions of lack of benefits, low wages and poor living and working conditions that plague the low-income community. Membership is open to anyone interested in fighting to change our economic conditions. Dues are voluntary and are 62 cents a month. All members are entitled to share in a group of benefits designed by members for members. There are 10 of them, and they involve actual needs of service workers in the Bay Area. We operate on a 24 hour a day, 7 day per week basis. We have no paid staff but we do train members and other volunteers in the method of systemic organizing so that those who choose to lead can step forward and do so.

COMMEMORATOR: With all this talk of enterprise zones, The Commemorator thinks it important that our readers have the facts. What is an enterprise zone?

BORDEAUX: Enterprise zones are areas where local city governments, under state authority, offer tax breaks and other incentives to businesses to locate in the zone. These are being touted as the way to bring jobs into an area. In reality, all they have ever done is to relocate jobs from one area to another, always with a wage reduction. Then with the tax breaks the government gives the businesses, the local government sentences itself to a future of lack of resources since they have agreed to reduce taxes on the only source of money, since the workers are not making enough money now for the cities to finance themselves from taxing them. With wages down, small shopkeepers that depend on the retail trade do not have people spending enough money in their stores to be able to survive and the small stores leave the enterprise zones.

The plan is to ...eliminate the state minimum wage for all employees within the zone

COMMEMORATOR: So you are saying that small businesses, workers and those that depend on city services all stand to lose in relation to enterprise zones.

BORDEAUX: The only businesses that benefit from enterprise zones are LARGE businesses. Mom and pop groceries, if they have any employees at all, do not hire enough people for the tax credits do them any good. Moving jobs from one part of the country to another only provides the most temporary benefit and places all workers in the country in competition for who will work for the lowest wages. Workers with low wages cannot afford to shop in small businesses or buy the products of small manufacturers who cannot compete pricewise with the large manufacturers who take advantage of cheap labor overseas, in enterprise zones or in prisons. Any plan to revitalize our low income communities for the benefit of the

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E-Zone

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According to Morse, several economists have pointed out that corporate businesses would reap the greater benefits from a program supposedly intended to help poor and minority workers and business owners. The purpose of EZ's is alleged to be to create minority jobs and business opportunities in inner cities, but the profits will rebound to employers who are mostly white, already wealthy and who live elsewhere.

According to low income worker delegates in the existing zones in Sacramento County, enterprise zones provide tax incentives only to the population best equipped to continue to pay its taxes; those whose businesses are in the black, whose profit margin would increase even more if workers were forced to take the jobs at wages lower than those collective bargaining can provide. Delegates describe them as "insider oriented, business as usual deals between politicians and greedy profiteers — the businesses that don't add to the economy of the community, they take from it. In short, enterprise zones undermine the economy of the entire state of California." Jobs that currently pay $14 or $15 an hour, under an Enterprise Zone will pay $5 to $6, or minimum wage, or less when minimum wage is suspended in the zone.

CALIFORNIA LAW "SUPERZONES"

Currently, California law provides for tax credits to businesses that hire "zone people;" generally a zone business can deduct 50% of the amount it pays in wages. No such deductions are allowed for wages over $6.37 per hour. This has created a de facto "maximum wage" for zone workers, installing a compelling barrier against raising wages for poor workers above the minimum.

Legislation recently defeated in a State Senate committee would have created a "superzone" in Los Angeles, repealing the state minimum wage in the zone, exempting businesses within the zone from any business license fees or payroll taxes levied by the city or county, providing corporations within the zone with a $25,000 deduction from taxable income and releasing businesses from environmental health and safety regulations. According to long-time zone opponent, Pete Johnson, "This is a program of slave labor imposed upon a regimented population of de facto second class citizens, being written off to preserve the priveleges of a few entrepreneurs a little longer. They need only put fences arond the boundaries of the zone to make it fully resemble the German concentration camps, with the Nazi slogan 'Arbeit Macht Frei' (work makes free) in wrought iron letters over the gate!"

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA: The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency's enterprise zone coordinator admits that, of the workers hired in Sacramento's four-year-old zone, over 60 percent were out of a job within three months and there has been no positive change for the groups targeted.

Computer-part manufacturers in Del Paso Heights/Northgate, for example, hire workers for $4.25 to $5.00 per hour, well below parity for the same jobs in Silicon Valley, while even top pay in the zone never rises above a $6.37 maximum per hour amount for which employers obtain tax benefits and subsidies under the law. Smaller businesses have been confounded by the complexities of the program. VH Foods in Sacramento reported laying off ten employees because they never received any of the purported benefits of the program. At the same time, the newer Oak Park Enterprise Zone has inspired rapid and artificial inflation of property values (over 100 percent for single-family houses in eighteen months), raising rents for residents barely surviving on meager incomes, increasing homelessness, and precluding home ownership for young working families.

REDDING, CALIFORNIA: According to Linda Trotter, spokesperson for the local Pepsi Cola plant in Redding, the company will receive a $75,000 tax credit under the enterprise zone law for purchase of new canning equipment, which will not require hiring of any additional workers, but may in fact cost the jobs of four or five seasonal workers during the summer months. Pepsi employees report that more layoffs are expected once the new equipment is operating, with workers automated out of work courtesy of the EZ breaks to the multi-national corporation.

PORTLAND, OREGON: Commissioner Bob Koch of Portland, Oregon said, "The enterprise zone tax breaks that went into effect in inner North/Northeast Portland had benefitted only one business so far, the controversial tax break given to Nabisco for a modernization that will reduce the number of jobs at its North Portland production plant."

He also said "the state law regarding enterprise zones doesn't guarantee that businesses will hire black employees, despite the higher-than-average number of blacks living in the zone in comparison to the citywide average."

Leadership

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prior police record of any kind. They were told it was their only way out and it was.

Many people, suffering from a lack of leadership, persuaded by the press and media, allowed those in charge to perpetrate perhaps the oldest trick in the book, "divide and conquer." While some 74% of the population were officially reported as outraged by the verdicts, government sources put forward a condemnation of the protests saying that "lawless" rioters should get what they deserve, changing the entire picture and dividing off those that didn't care for the government-presented violence. The court system continued to show its utter disregard for the rights of the poor and minorities in our society.

Rodney King - The Current Situation:

When the *Commemorator* contacted the Los Angeles Police Department to get a statement on the King incident and the current situation, our reporter was referred to the office of Press Relations. When asked if there was any basis in the claims of racial bias on the part of the four officers,

More people are already in the streets in protest than will vote in the upcoming elections

Officer Bill Frio of that office replied: "I have no idea." He added "On the first appearance Mr. King made on TV, he said that there were no racial slurs used." Officer Frio went on to say: "Both he [Rodney King] and his attorney said that this is not a racial issue. So where that is generated from I have no idea."

King's attorney, Steve Lerman responded to Frio's assertion "as a matter of fact that is fairly incorrect. Originally Mr. King had not divulged the racial remarks that were made at the scene for fear there would be a race riot... His mother had implored him not to reveal the racist epithets and it turns out that his mother was unusually prophetic."

"It would appear that Mr. King was well intentioned in doing that but at last the truth came out," said Lerman. "You can clearly hear the word 'nigger' several times on the tape... Certainly the remark of officer Powell that the 'gorilla in the mist,' ...'monkey in the mist,' 'barbequing citizens on Slausen.' I mean the whole thing, the whole brutally racist commentary. Whatever Mr. King might have said while he was in custody at the sheriff's facility, one has to be mindful, he wasn't sitting in his living-room with his legs crossed, smoking a pipe, he was in custody."

Asked about the civil actions that are being pursued, Lerman said "right now Mr. King has civil actions for damages for violation of civil rights. It's essentially a civil matter, the criminal matter is being pursued by the Department of Justice. The focus in the civil case is on the City of Los Angeles having an unconstitutional policy and practice. The policies and practice focus is best exemplified by the Christopher Commission's material following their in depth hearings; essentially the Committee findings were that the City of Los Angeles has allowed, due to a deliberate indifference to the Constitutional rights of its citizens, a constitutionally deficient policy and practice to exist, which we believe, and will have to prove, was the actual proximate cause of the so-called King incident. These officers, not only violated King's civil rights based on their intentional actions but, more so, as a result of their training deficiency.

Further, on the claims of racial bias on the part of the four officers, Lerman pointed out, "the constitutional deficient policy and practice is to allow racism to proliferate and through various and sundry components like retaliatory discipline, assignments, promotions, racism is really intertwined with the notion by a lot of white officers that minorities are not to be handled the same way as whites."

A Call For Grassroots Community Organization To Ensure Justice

The Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party continually sup-

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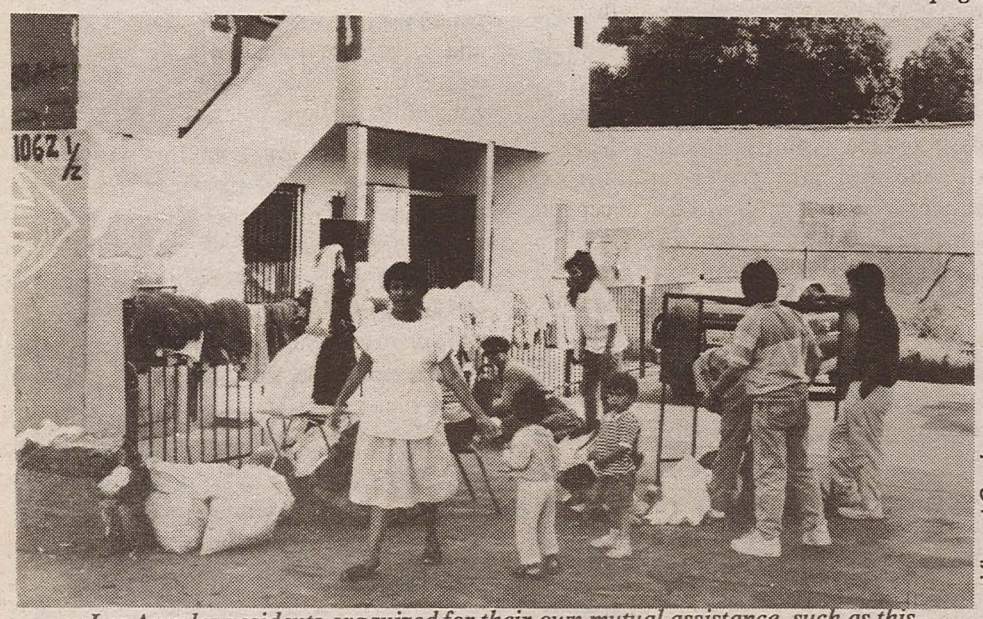

Vincent Gordon

Los Angeles residents organized for their own mutual assistance, such as this clothing distribution, when official relief sources failed to come through.

Vincent Gordon

Businesses in low income neighborhoods need real change that benefits the entire community, not just outside investors.

A Tale of Two Cities

Vince Gordon, Commemorator Staff member, visited Los Angeles shortly after the Rodney King verdict, working with the Orange County office of Western Service Workers Assiciation out of their newly established benefit office in Los Angeles. The following are his personal observations immediately following the protests.

by Vincent Gordon

Walking through the streets of South Central Los Angeles is sure to explode all pre-conceived Brady Bunch fantasies of the nation's second largest city. Heading westward from Watts along Imperial Highway, a bleak cloud of smog hangs above the crumbling infrastructure. Endless rows of decrepit, bunker-style housing units stretch for miles across a vast industrial wasteland. Wide empty spaces spotted with garbage, and tracts of burnt or abandoned buildings, left a sort of "post-world" feeling on my soul. Giant, super highways loomed overhead, with the constant sound of traffic buzzing back and forth over the forgotten land.

Crowds of people gather on the corners and the parking lots, fixing old cars, selling or dealing whatever they can find to stay alive in a desperate game of survival. The only interaction with the outside world are the ominous helicopters flying above, monitoring their urban prison, sweeping down occasionally in Vietnam-style raids in the name of law and order.

The mood and feeling on the streets is that of being under siege, like any occupied territory of a developing nation, stupefied by poverty, constantly under attack, forced to struggle even against each other just to survive.

It has recently come to light that many of those arrested for "looting" in the uprising were caught stealing food, diapers and other basic necessity items. Many residents of the South Central area are now having to go to neighboring towns to buy groceries because of the food shortage since the riots. Food has become scarce because many of the liquor stores were destroyed, and the ones left have raised their prices due to the high demand. One resident, a single mother and grandmother, tells of shopping in the neighboring town of Hawthorne, where she was chastised while standing in line with other shoppers. "Why are you coming here for food after burning down your own community?" she was asked angrily. "Why don't you go back to where you came from!"

Perhaps no other city in America is as polarized socially and politically as Los Angeles. It is reminiscent of Charles Dickens' classic words, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." The mainstream culture and ideology, glaring from TV's, radios and billboards completely shuts out the voice of L.A.'s poor communities. The Hollywood fantasy of Los Angeles, "the city of lights," as George Bush calls it, has given a distorted self-image to all of America, including suburban L.A county, which on the surface, seems unaffected by what's going on in their own backyard. While the superficial image of glamour and wealth projected by television shows like 90210 has become the model for bourgeois culture across the country, the feeling of hopelessness and rage burning in South Central has, similarly, become a symbol of urban America's darker side, its growing ghettoes and slums, wrought with undercurrents of rebellion and desire for change. And now, as the government pushes forward with its enterprise zones, the president, the mayor and other local officials plan to institutionalize South Central's poverty forever.

As I walked through Watts that sunny, smoggy Sunday afternoon, I came upon a billboard with the words of Rodney King, "Can't we all just get along?" and as I looked out across the landscape, all I could think was, "No. Not until everything is totally changed."

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ported the call for the U.S. Department of Justice to bring federal recourse in the form of a grand jury investigation under the Civil Rights Acts, inquiring into the activities of those who make the policies of its courts, its departments, its administration; in short, all those who might have acted in collusion and conspiracy to perpetrate the systematic denial of constitutional rights of the members of our communities. Melvin Dickson, Chairman of the Commemoration Committee notes, "The indictments the Justice Department finally came up with are too little, too late. It's not enough to re-examine the guilt of four police officers — a serious investigation must look at the the process followed by the police, the prosectuors, the defense and the courts to make this miscarriage of justice possible. We need to build organization to ensure that the justice system of the City of Los Angeles, and around the country, functions for people of all strata, all races, all colors. That requires that we organize attorneys, clergy, concerned citizens from throughout the country, starting here in California. We cannot give the government any pretext for the kind of campaign of savage murder brought upon the Black Panther Party in the late 1960s or the people of the City of Los Angeles in spring of this year."

No E.Z. Solution

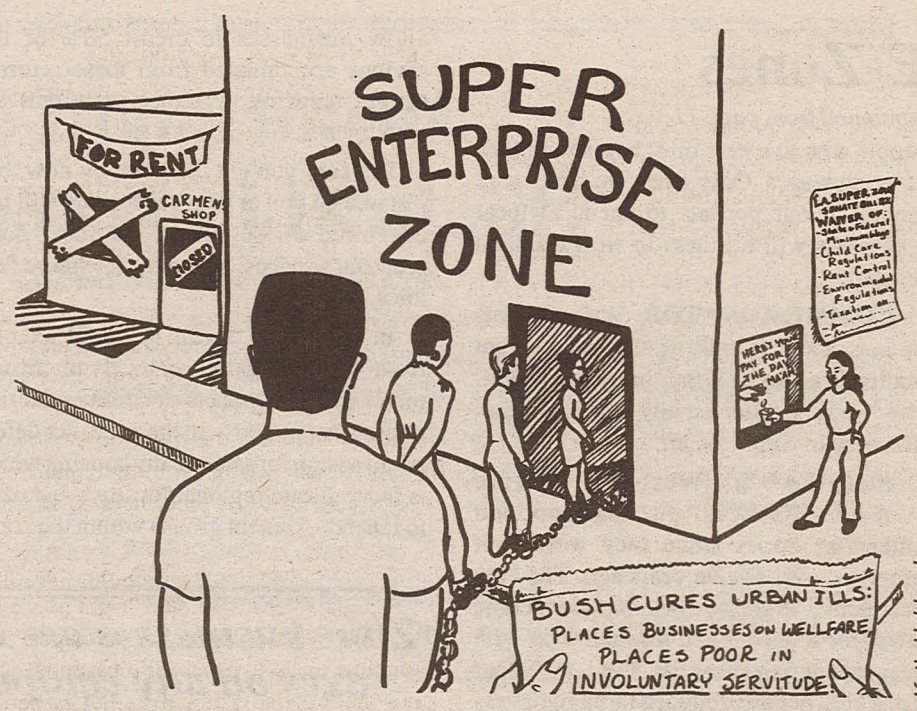
Conditions in south central Los Angeles have reached extreme straits since the protests of late April and early May. One in three lives below the poverty level, up since the famous Watts riots of the middle 1960s. Area residents, more than 50% Hispanic, reported many of the buildings and businesses had been boarded up for the 27 years since then. Looting and burning cost the area thousands of jobs, an estimated 4000 permanently, while food, housing and other necessities remain in short supply. Pat O'Neill, a long time community activist in the Los Angeles area commented, "We've tried elections, we've tried protests, we're well beyond that now. We've been attacked by the police. When the President visited Los Angeles, he hid from the public and the press wouldn't even take pictures."

"We've tried elections, we've tried protests..."

In New York, Mayor Dinkins publicly thanked the press for not covering the protests and cooperating with the government. Since then two New York Hispanic youths have been murdered by police, prompting him to call for a grand jury investigation of the police, starting the process of individual scapegoating all over again.

Kwaku Duren, acting Chair of the Los Angeles Rebellion Action Network which came together about a week after the lifting of the curfew that covered Los Angeles in the wake of the King protests, said, "People are really tired of the promises of do-nothing apologists of both the Democrats and the Republicans." He added, "The sentiment has been there in the community in support of change. People really want change."

Government-promised relief, in the form of direct payments and Small Business Administration loans, simply was not



furnished. Government figures show only eight SBA loans were approved out of over 5000 applications. Federal jobs and economic aid in the form of enterprise zones have proven to be a costly failure.

Responding to the Rodney King aftermath, Duren, who is also a candidate for the 37th Congressional District including Compton and portions of south central Los Angeles, said, "Obviously, I think there was some responsibility on the part of the government and that if something is not done people's sentiments will simmer again and we will have a repeat of the April-May rebellion. Money that has been promised for the community has not been realized, for the most part. There's been showcases but generally there's been very little money coming into the community," said Duran.

The "Superzone" Is Defeated

A typical political reaction immediately after the King aftermath was State Senator Bill Leonard's proposal for the senate Republican Caucus, to turn south central Los Angeles into a "super" enterprise zone, which would take the zone concept a step further than previous legislation. This plan, if it had passed, would have eliminated state minimum wage for zone residents, employment and environmental safety and health requirements, rent control and a lot of child-labor protection, all in the name of trying to stimulate investment in the area and provide a low-wage labor force to do the work of rebuilding."

Despite claims that it was a solution to the economic problems faced by the low-income and minority communities, enterprise zones have without exception served to spend a lot of tax payer money to bring the economy down even further," said Priscilla Abbott, Operations Manager of the Western Service Workers Association in Sacramento which led the fight to successfully defeat SB-18X within the State Legislature. Ms. Abbott added "that SB-18X would have also undermined unions and the workers' rights to collective bargaining. Although massive community mobilization and lobbying resulted in the defeat of SB 18X in the state senate Committee on Government Operations, by a vote 6 to 1, the bill is likely to return, if not named SB-18X (SUPERZONE) it will be called something else, but the content will remained the same.

"Presently, enterprise zones involve the expenditure of millions of dollars to destroy thousands of union or higher paid jobs in factories throughout the state, to be replaced by minimum wage piecework, temporary work and cottage industry work, a portion of which will be temporarily parcelled out to the black, Hispano and other minority populations amidst much fanfare, only to have them suffer, within a matter of months or years, from the last-hired/first-fired principle which has always applied to such workers.

Reports from New Jersey organizations which have conducted extensive surveys into the effect enterprise zones have had there, where the programs have been piloted at the state level, indicate that job formation was so low, its cost to the taxpayer per job was in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, while the average pay of workers actually dropped from pre-zone days. In the process, literally millions of dollars were lost to the local economy in the form of salaries and tax revenues, while unions and other institutions of former protection for portions of the resident population, disappeared.

While substantially more people are already in the streets in protest than will vote in the upcoming elections, the Presidential contenders, as well as virtually all mayors and governors in the nation, have announced their support for the enterprise zone initiative nonetheless.

The *Commemorator* was formed to give voice to those who felt the need to organize on behalf of the poor, especially minorities, of our communities who are being attacked from all sides by the government, speculators and the press. Said Dickson, "All we have is our own ability to organize the material things we need while we work toward longer-range solutions. This paper and this committee can make an important contribution to that effort."

All those interested in contributing their time and resources should call (510) 841-9063 or (510) 652-8828.

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people who live here must begin with jobs at living wages. Only when we have more money in our pockets to spend at local businesses will business in west Oakland prosper.

COMMEMORATOR: With the riots in L.A. there is talk of the government putting in a "Super Zone" in South Central. Has WSWA collected any more information on the "Super Zone?"

BORDEAUX: Western Service Workers Association has opposed enterprise zones since they were first proposed over twelve years ago. They are destructive to the struggle of low-income labor for a decent life through jobs with adequate pay and benefits. The L.A "Super Zone" has been introduced through regressive and racialist legislation currently under the designation Senate Bill 18X that is being pushed by an anti-labor politician, Sen. Bill Leonard, head of the Senate Republican caucus, which will probably get out in circulation in its first draft to the Senate next week.

COMMEMORATOR: What does SENATE BILL 18X propose?

BORDEAUX: The draft proposals include, in regards to wages, language that says "the rebuilding process will not be successful unless there is a readily deployable work force at the **lowest possible wage costs.**"

The plan is to suspend state and local prevailing wage requirements, eliminate the state minimum wage for all employment within the zone, and seek federal waiver of any applicable federal minimum wage laws for a period of three years.

In relation to housing they will eliminate the necessity for new projects to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act for five years and urge the federal government to raise their insurance limit on private-activity municipal bonds. No rent control law shall apply within the zone.

In terms of the environment, they are proposing to grant a temporary waiver of environmental regulations for all business building, rebuilding, or expanding in riot-torn or disaster-struck areas of California for a period of five years. The plan to exempt any construction for three years from any Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement requirements after the temporary waiver expires, requires that heightened consideration be given to the total cost of regulations as well as their technical feasibility. They will expand programs intended to train company employees to function as inspectors and allow businesses to conduct their own surveys.

On the question of Worker's Compensation, officials plan a special "anti-fraud" effort in the zone. They plan to eliminate cumulative stress claims; forbid stress claims resulting from firing, layoff, or demotion; and make vocational rehab programs optional for employers. No reports requested by the employee would be permissible in determining the extent of any injury. The current plan would also allow businesses to credit 50% of the savings accumulated from these reforms toward reducing insurance premiums for employers.

I'm sure you get the point by now, but just in case you or your readers are still not convinced whose interest the Super Zone proposal services, here are a few more features.

In regards to taxes, it would exempt from taxation gains realized on investments in capital assets or commercial real or personal property in the zone, tax deferral provision for sales of any housing which is federal/state/regional/locally subsidized to tenants or tenant groups within the zone.

Zone businesses are exempt from sales and use taxes on any equipment for a 3-year period, exempt from corporation income taxes or franchise taxes on the first $25,000 of corporate net income for a 3-year period, and exempt from any business license fees or payroll taxes levied by the city or county.

Zone participants will be allowed to carry forward net operating loss deductions, unlimited as to time or amount. Zone businesses are exempt from sales and use taxes on any equipment for a 3-year period, exempt from corporation income taxes or franchise taxes on the first $25,000 of corporate net income for a 3-year period, and exempt from any business license fees or payroll taxes levied by the city or county.

Also exempt from tax (including Unrelated Business Taxable Income provisions) are the earnings from investment of funds by charitable and philanthropic organizations. Yes, these people can play the market with your donations and if they are in the zones, they can do it tax free.

Let's talk about child care laws for working mothers. In the zone, requirements and regulations that apply to child care providers will be temporarily waived for non-profit or at-home individual providers so as to alleviate any problems of child care supply and demand in the zone. That means that standards of safety, cleanliness and investigation of potential child care providers for previous criminal records will be eliminated.

Lastly, there is the question of health care availability for the poor. In the zone the law will remove mandates on health care policies and allow insurance companies to fashion a bare bones, low cost policy, further institutionalizing a two-tier health care system of one for the rich, and one for the poor.

COMMEMORATOR: Critics of the enterprise zones have long claimed that the EZ program gives away community resources to the businesses and nothing back to communities, but what else is there we should know about the zones?

BORDEAUX: There is a much bigger agenda behind the zones program. This zone arrangement makes obsolete portions of the federal Humphrey-Hawkins law, which requires that employers NOT use government subsidized labor where labor unions exist. Corporations create outside feeder service aggregates where skill is not needed and supervision alone can do the job previously done by factory management and union contract. This allows them to provide the required speed and rate, at $4.25 an hour, that was previously attained at $21.75. It may be good for business owners in the short term, but it impoverishes workers into a slave-labor condition.

COMMEMORATOR: So EZs are effectively an attack against organized labor?

BORDEAUX: Exactly, they allow businesses to cut union jobs and farm them out through subcontracts to minimum wage producers of parts of what used to made on assembly lines. Adolf Hitler accomplished the same purpose with his dramatic canceling out of the unions in 1936. This is a lower key approach to attempt to fire an economy with the very same torch.

COMMEMORATOR: What will be the effect on other sectors of the community?

BORDEAUX: Well, it goes without saying that those professionals and small business people who depend on our spending will go down along with us, or maybe even before us. You see, businesses outside the zone won't be able to compete with those inside the zone; there is no way legitimate businesses can compete with federally subsidized businesses paying slave wages. So, as the government points to the increase in hiring in the zones, they are ignoring the layoffs that take place from failed businesses outside the zone and the spendable income lost to the community.

COMMEMORATOR: How does Super Zone relate to LA riots?

BORDEAUX: In the 60s, after the Watts (a typical urban ghetto) rebellions spread across this land, the government came in with a lot of poverty money and programs, which facilitated the co-optation of activists who began to organize against the conditions of poverty and police brutality which are the major cause of riots in the first place. Today, with over three trillion dollars in debt, the government is broke. From Bill Clinton, Jerry Brown, Jesse Jackson to Ross Perot and President Bush, the economic solution to urban neglect and blight is EZ. EZ is the new economic mechanism of co-optation by promising an economic solution to generations of government neglect. They are saying that EZ will provide jobs for minorities and the "disadvantaged." None of these high profile leaders, as well as local leaders, Democrats and Republicans, have taken a stand against EZ and exposed them for what they are. And many have actually advanced their support for these zones. Since the LA unrest, after the Rodney King verdict, people in general have been calling for an economic solution. And with the so-called leaders not speaking out against it, the riots have made it easier for the government to arbitrarily step up the EZ without properly informing people, not to mention getting input from the strata of low income community which is negatively affected. Once the this super zones instituted in LA, the precedent is set. If you check it out you will see that the direction California moves is the way that the country moves. For example the workfare programs that are at the heart of what remains of the welfare system in the country were first tested out when Ronald Reagan was governor.

COMMEMORATOR: The government claims the zones are supposed to help get people off welfare and into jobs. What does WSWA think of that as a zone benefit?

BORDEAUX: They aren't getting people off welfare, they are putting businesses on welfare. The zones are not the solution to systemic and economic problems, which are manifested in terms of social ills. But what they are doing is institutionalizing poverty further. The zones use the poverty of workers who are unable to move elsewhere in search of better jobs as leverage to force them to accept zone jobs, while taking a zone job increasingly becomes a mandatory condition for ever being able to receive any form of government assistance. The zones have thus created a condition of INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE for their inhabitants. The zones do not provide opportunities for these workers to get off government assistance, but only accelerate economic deterioration, with the taxpayers and legitimate businesses footing the bill, instead of providing REAL jobs for REAL wages and thus REAL economic revitalization. Enterprise zones in that sense are illegitimate: They are both MORALLY and ECONOMICALLY unsound.

COMMEMORATOR: What solutions do you prescribe and what can people do on a local level to fight being "ZONED"?

BORDEAUX: Organize! WSWA needs volunteers to learn to build the kind of organization that it will take to combat these slave-labor programs. We need people to join our community canvass campaign going door-to-door to explain the reality of what enterprise zones are about and how only a small number of people will ever realize any long-term benefits from them while the rest of us will find our suffering extended. We need to publicize our benefit program including the expansion of our Legal Educational and Information Sessions which provide free legal advice to low-income workers and their families.

There is so much to be done and we strongly encourage anyone interested in fighting the enterprise zone or other short-sighted schemes come by WSWA at 1666 7th Street, Oakland, CA or call Alicia 510-832-2111 right away.

Summit

Continued from Page 1

and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 28, and Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 29, organized mass rallies to mobilize not only the workers themselves but community support in the face of a fight with the new Summit Medical conglomerate.

"Management paid them as much as fifty dollars an hour with bonuses."

While the contracts with the unions theoretically guaranteed union members the right to respect the picket lines of other unions, one union representative asserted that management had maneuvered the settlements in such a manner as to insure that none of the the unions would ever again have their contracts come up for bargaining at the same time.

Summit had flown in outside strikebreakers who worked without a contract. According to an anonymous worker, "Management paid them as much as fifty dollars an hour with bonuses."

The Other Side Reacts

According to the five unions, Summit's Treasurer, William F. Ausfahl, serves on the Summit Board's Executive Committee. He is also the Group Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the Clorox Company (on the Fortune 500 list), headquartered in Oakland. He has rejected all union efforts to meet with him, referring them instead to a professional union-busting firm.

The strikers and their five unions called on the local community to join them on the picket line and to boycott Clorox products until the strike ended.

Former presidential candidates, Jerry Brown and Rev. Jesse Jackson, made appearances during this election year to offer their support. Local state Assemblywoman Barbara Lee and Oakland Mayor Elihu Harris endorsed the unions position, as did Rev. J. Alfred Smith, who officiated at the funeral of the late Black Panther Party founder, Dr. Huey P. Newton.

At a rally early in the strike, Jerry Brown, who in his presidential campaign advocated low-wage "enterprize zones in every major city," told strikers, "In Germany, the country that we (sic) defeated, they have much more unionization than we do. They make $22-$23 an hour on average." (enterprise zones under California Law provide employers incentives to hiring workers paid up to $6.38 per hour.)

Protest At Large

On the afternoon of Sunday, 7 June, a militant rally of strikers, supporters from other unions, and just plain folks assembled to keep up the morale and fighting spirit of the strike. Jesse Jackson spoke at the rally and emphasized two points. First, he repeated over and over that the strike was not about money; it was for "dignity." Second, Jackson reported that management was afraid the workers would "abuse" the sympathy clause, although as he noted, that had never happened. He said it was possible to work out a "process" to reassure Summit on this point. Many workers immediately commented that the right to support fellow workers in another union and defend each other from management demands for cutbacks, extra payments for health benefits, and all the other money issues *is* the point of a sympathy strike.

The final, federally mediated agreement stated, "it shall not be a violation of this agreement for the union to respect the lawful, primary picket line of another union representing the hospital's employees." (In order for the union to do this they would have to notify management 90 days in advance of the request to negotiate, notify the Federal Mediation Service 60 days in advance, participate in a federally chaired Board of Inquiry 30 days prior to the strike, and comply with National Labor Relations Act regulations to provide notice in writing 10 days prior to a projected strike date).

They also, according to the Oakland Tribune on 11 June, said they would meet twice with a negotiator before walking out, and set up a 12-member patient care committee to insure that the strike did not disrupt business.

Summit Lays Off Strikers

According to the California Nurses Association spokesperson Jennifer Watson, of the 100 CNA members laid off after the strike, "50-60 have still not been called back to work."

In response to the 1992 version of "double speak" one long time organizer said, "You don't need to read the paper to tell you what's happening, only to find out what they are calling it. Layoffs or 'restructuring' it's all the same. More working people are out of work."

At one point in the strike, Summit management demanded more concessions than they had already gotten from the unions, and negotiations collapsed. At this point, only *after* the union position had surrendered the essence of sympathy rights, did local officials voice support. Central labor councils, the Oakland city council and Alameda supervisors all advised members of their health plans to boycott Summit for the duration of the strike.

Prior to negotiations restarting on June 24, Summit management suggested a 60-day waiting period before a sympathy walkout. It also wanted to declare which workers, primarily nurses, were so-called essential personnel forbidden to strike.

A support rally for the strike was held on July 5. Almost 200 people heard the union negotiators report that on July 1 a federal mediator had proposed 1) no strikes during an agreement, 2) a series of negotiating periods before a strike of any kind could occur, 3) a ten-day notice before any strike, and 4) a government-chaired board of inquiry to publicize its evaluation of strike issues.

Despite having voiced concern for patient care throughout the strike, Summit suffered embarrassment in early July when state inspectors cited serious problems with patient care as administered by the scab-operated hospital.

Announcing union acceptance of the terms, Sal Rosselli, president of Local 250, told the press on July 3 that these terms accept more government intervention than in any of the local's over one hundred contracts with northern California health providers.

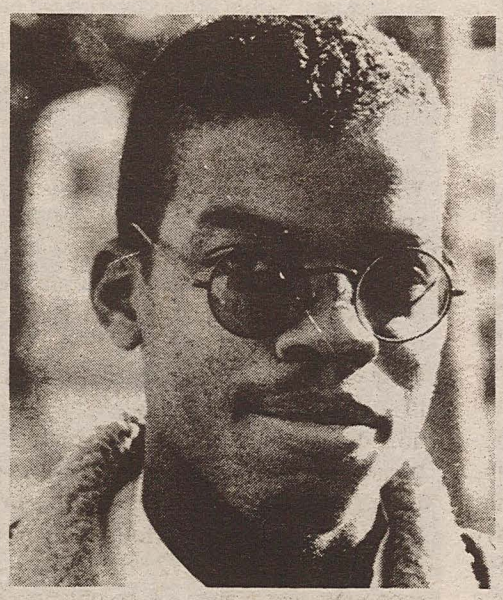
Conscientious

Continued from page 4

white men of middle- and upper-class backgrounds. An African American enlisted person seeking a C.O. discharge is trying to express beliefs from his class or race perspective. In the case of women C.O.s, they do not share a female perspective. The applicant is a subordinate to the investigating officer assigned to study the application, so he or she must try to express those beliefs without offending this superior officer.

I was assigned Captain Swanson, a white man, as my investigating officer. He asked typical questions, customized for an African American, like: Would you fight in the Civil War to free the slaves? What kinds of conflicts would you fight in, if they occurred in Africa?

Swanson's report was based on racial stereotypes, attacking people and organizations with which I had worked. He stated that I am a Marine of marginal intelligence. There is an inherent stereotype that black people are not intelligent enough to be C.O.s. In his summary of my investigative hearing, Swanson wrote, "After observing Cpl. Jones throughout the investigation, I



believe that he is incapable of articulating any discerning thoughts or perceptions concerning such subjective matters as conscientious objection to war."

Capt. Swanson was very prejudiced against any organization that helped me during the C.O. process. He referred to Vietnam veterans as "disgruntled vets," and the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker based pacifist organization, as an "off-center group."

Another step in the C.O. process is an interview with the "moral officer," a military chaplain who upholds military values. The chaplain plays a large role in determining the applicant's sincerity of belief. I am from a Muslim family; there are few Muslim chaplains. Fortunately, I was assigned an African American chaplain who, although of different faith, was able to relate to my experience. He stated my beliefs are sincerely held.

There is so much misunderstanding of black people and what pacifism can mean for a black person. When living in a society in which aggression is treated as the best way to solve problems and money is more important than human life, the African American has a problem. A low value is put on the black person's life, making him or her a target for violence. So how can we find the pacifist ways to resolve differences?

What is more, white Americans do not understand us. The NAACP surveyed white Americans during the Persian Gulf War. People of color made up 40 percent of the front line troops. Yet, 55 percent of white Americans surveyed believed that African Americans and Hispanics are more violent, not as brave, less patriotic and less intelligent than white Americans. This obviously has a big impact on the persons of color seeking a C.O. discharge.

The average C.O. faces a misguided and sometimes hostile public. He or she also confronts a hostile chain of command, part of a monolithic organization that has historically violated human and civil rights whenever it believes that it will help "get the job done."

The C.O. of color faces, in addition, a narrow and biased definition of who is sincerely a C.O. Confronted with racism, sexism, and cultural ignorance, the obstacles before an African American C.O. is a jagged ravine with hungry sharks waiting at the bottom.

Vincent Gordon

Another burned building provides mute testimony to 25 years of accumulated rage, as L.A. residents demand justice and economic recovery.

POETIC PROTEST: West Oakland Artists' Response To L. A. Uprising

Interview with Wanda Sabir, Coordinator

COMMEMORATOR: What's the purpose of the "Poetic Protest"?

W.S.: The purpose of the "Poetic Protest" is twofold. One is the opportunity for people of color and some of the white people to get together and express how they feel about the social, economic and political conditions in this country that led to the Rodney King verdict and the aftermath of destruction. The second part of this event is to organize, network, coalition build, and raise funds to send to the city of Los Angeles for victims, since it's a war torn city even though we can use the funds here.

COMMEMORATOR: How organizational, how community-wide do you expect this networking activity to be?

W.S.: I basically believe that artists are not recognized in this country like they are in other parts of the world. The artist is always the bearer of the truth. My media happens to be poetry. That's why it's a poetic protest. But I would like for people of color to come together and form some kind of organization. We have people signing up on our mailing list. We are going to share it in the other communities. We have a lot of literature out there from all the communities that are involved here: the Asian communities (Koreans, Chinese), Africans and African Americans, Latino and hopefully, people will make some connections. We really need to get organized.

COMMEMORATOR: Elaborate on the organizing part and the artistic part. How does organization and the artist work together?

W.S.: Well, artists usually have big egos. They like performing, they like to speak. They like getting their work out. And the organizing part: I'm sort of moved to do that. You know we have a lot of different organizations, we have a lot of different artists, but we don't ever come together. We wanted to come together over this crisis.

COMMEMORATOR: I want to clarify that point: Why do we come together in crisis?

W.S.: Well, in the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict and the incidents afterwards, if we had as Angela Davis says "a strategy," if we had planned — you know, lots of people say they weren't surprised but so many people are more followers than leaders, more reactors than proactive. The proactive people should have had a plan to promote community. Basically, we should have been able to stop it, before we had to try to get out of L.A. But it happened. We should have had an alternative plan on what to do if the verdict was "Not Guilty."

I mean, we might have decided to burn down Los Angeles, but it should have been our plan, rather than just reacting like that. So anyway, I have to do this on a regular basis to bring communities together. Hopefully, they'll go back to their own communities and build as Erika [Huggins] said to build and teach first in their own communities about racism and what they need to do to overcome in this more dominant society: The white [supremacist] majority. We are all opressed and we can come together to plan some big things together.

I have an idea for a progam later in the fall, a theater piece. It's called "Racism Creators — Smashing the Stereotypes."

COMMEMORATOR: So meanwhile, this evening, what can the average John/Jane Doe do tomorrow to further this event?

W.S.: What they can do is be a new person and find an existing orgnization moving in the community. They might want to talk to (former) Black Panthers or to Ericka. It depends... they might want to get with the International Black Writers and Artists. There are alot of organizations — they need to hook up the regular John/Jane Doe. Hopefully, they will bond. And will find that person before they leave and exchange numbers. People will continue to dialogue and get busy!

Benefits Office Opens in Protest City

Santa Ana, Calif. — Pete Johnson, operations manager of WSWA, Orange County, announced today that a secondary benefits office had been opened near Vermont and West Eighth Streets, Los Angeles, at a temporary location in space donated by the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles at 2934 W. 8th St, and under the direction of Cristina DeBono, regional field director for the organization on the West Coast.

Johnson announced the additional office was established by WSWA Orange because of the wide-ranging pattern of its membership outside the boundaries of Orange County, and the lack of transportation and accessibility to membership temporarily employed and unemployed within the inner cities area. An enormous demand was suddenly placed upon the organization's Benefit and Benefit II system due to the number of emergencies caused by the recent protests. At the same time Johnson requested not only the community, but the rest of the state and the nation come to the aid of those within the lower-income population of the area.

One mother described how her son had been beaten nearly to death by prison guards.

It's a Nightmare in Los Angeles

"It's a nightmare for lower-income people over there in L.A.," said Chris Brown, whose duties have included the enrollment of new volunteers and aid for the project. "This is the kind of thing you would expect would bring government out in defense of the poor, but maybe their ability for that kind of organizational effort is so torn up, they haven't gotten around to it yet."

Seven of twelve WSWA members attending a recent house meeting near 49th and Central — one of a series taking place throughout South Central Los Angeles — requested legal advice, and all 12 reported either having been in prison or had relatives currently incarcerated. One mother described how her son had been beaten nearly to death by prison guards.

DeBono reported that the members signed at house meetings held soon after the benefit office was opened unanimously indicated that they had seen no aid or aid effort where they live in south central Los Angeles.

"This is an area, clearly rundown with many boarded up buildings prior to the riots, that now had practically every corner with buildings burned to the ground. There aren't stores for miles that are open," she said.

Climate of Fear and Hysteria

From a simple beginning of one hastily prepared Legal Educational Information Session shortly after the benefit office opening in Los Angeles, the number of requests for legal benefits rapidly grew to the point that WSWA is now holding two to three such sessions a week and plans more as more attorneys are contacted who

The unemployment rate in the whole south central side of town was easily 30% before the outbreak of unrest.

continued next page

CCMP needs Organizers

CCMP is the only organization in the country where physicians and nurses can practice their professions ethically on behalf of unrecognized workers. Volunteers with medical skills are needed but a concern for those who cannot afford to stay healthy is the only requirement.

Write to: CCMP

2205 Fourteenth Ave. Oakland CA 94606

Call: (510) 436-8020

L.A. Benefits Office

continued from previous page

say they will help. Many attorneys have already agreed to provide pro bono representation through WSWA's Benefit Plan II program.

In the case of a member who already lost her job because of charges pending against her, WSWA's legal benefit staff won a small initial victory, overcoming what DeBono called "a climate of fear and hysteria which has swept away concern for due process and presumption of innocence." A newly committed volunteer attorney obtained what would previously have been a routine continuance to prepare for the preliminary hearing, in the face of stated judicial unwillingness to delay for any cause.

Johnson, in Orange County, added that volunteer professionals from the local community have been calling in. "We are advising and helping people with transportation," he said, "after accepting professional advice on our own on the ethical ramifications of each profession involved. People who begin with next to nothing and then suffer oppression, can develop problems that aren't too easily solved, but that's why we're here. In the first two days

"President Bush came to use the rioting as an excuse to promote economic programs like the superzone that are against the interests of the vast majority."

nearly a hundred volunteer workers were already signed up to learn various aspects of the work of running the benefit office, and many are now doing it, while 100 more had signed up in recent weeks and are still awaiting calls to make schedules for actual training."

Mass Arrests

According to the Los Angeles county public defenders office, 85% of those arrested in the immediate aftermath of the Rodney King verdict had no prior criminal record. Many of those swept up in mass arrests have come to legal education and information sessions reporting that they were held for up to seven days before arraignment for curfew violations that carry a ten-day sentence if they are convicted, meaning they have already served most of the sentence before even a determination of probable cause.

Members in the North Long Beach area also report that what little business had been left in the neighborhood was now devastated. A contractor for local grocery stores, out of work since they are no longer open, said his entire neighborhood had been raided by police "in search of stolen goods," but he didn't have anything to take as most of his creditors had been there first due to his loss of income. A neighbor, he added, was arrested for curfew violation standing in his own front yard, but was released because the Long Beach jails were too full to hold all those arrested. Local businesses, he said, were not to date being offered any of the federal funding for the area.

Typical of many of those arrested and seeking legal assistance, according to WSWA Volunteers Coordinator John Barnard, is a woman currently seeking legal assistance who found no stores open within several miles of her home and had no means of transportation. She ventured into the gutted remnants of an already looted store in search of food for her children. This was about the time that police were beginning to return in force back to areas they had abandoned early in the disturbances, to arrest anyone they could find, according to reports from many residents.

Both Johnson and Brown declined to comment on the number of members actually within the area where the protests occurred. According to Chris Brown, it was impossible to tell. The peculiar Los Angeles situation requires that those who serve unrecognized workers in the field of service work go wherever the opportunity presents itself. Sometimes members will move to an area, wait for a time empty-handed, and then move on to another section where someone has landed a job.

"It's people who are trying to work who are paying the price," DeBono said. "When one is out on the streets looking, the general trend toward you is pretty demeaning. The unemployment rate in the whole south central side of town was easily 30% before the outbreak of unrest, when you consider that the official figures never count those who were on unemployment and it ran out, or those who were working at jobs that did not pay into unemployment insurance. That would include independent contractors, small businesses that just closed, and domestic work. Now, there were a reported 40,000 jobs lost from the destruction, and about 20,000 jailed, so this is a condition that won't go away overnight and will have its rippling effect throughout the city."

Enterprise Zones Denounced

An active member and organizer from South Central Los Angeles, angered by President Bush's proposed "superzone" enterprise zone for the riot torn area, is organizing a new series of house meetings to mobilize members to demand positive alternatives.

"President Bush didn't come to LA after the riots to prevent future rioting," she said. "He came to use the rioting as an excuse to promote economic programs like the superzone that are against the interests of the vast majority."

WSWA led the way in defeating a proposed state law for Los Angeles that would have suspended the state minimum wage and request a waiver of the federal minimum wage for workers in the zone. It also would have lifted most environmental and health restrictions, business licensing requirements and called for schools to cooperate with businesses on vocational training that many view as a thinly disguised proposal for child labor.

Those wishing to help in any way can call (213) 382-3114 in Los Angeles or (714) 754-8513 in Orange County. Needed at this time is food, both non-perishables and meats and vegetables can be distributed. The Benefit office needs Group III Fax machines and an AT type or better PC or a Macintosh. Most of all, volunteers are needed to learn to run the 11 Point Benefit Program, handle legal request intakes, food and clothing distributions, and the other activities operating seven days, during hours that are being established.

Melvin Dickson

Sonny Lewis and his South Street Band at Black Family Togetherness Day

Family Day For Geronimo

(Sacramento) The First Black Family Togetherness Day in honor of Geronimo's ji Jaga (Pratt), the longest held political prisoner of African descent in the United States, was just that—a Family Togetherness Day. About 75 people attended the benefit, including former Black Panther members, local artists, businesses, organizers and children — a broad representation of the African American community.

A mixture of arts and crafts, jazz/blues and a cappella music, West African dance, face-painting (done by black clown, Doris Lilly) story-telling, by Mama E'Sahbo (Jarnice E. Baxter), speakers, poets and food. The atmosphere reaffirmed the belief in self-determination through unity, a main thrust of the Black liberation and cultural movement of the 60s/70s.

The performances was special and carried a message. Sonny Lewis, saxophone player, a mellow "South Street Band" opened the program with "Summertime," and set the tone of positive interaction.

Mama E'Sahbo was clearly a highlight of the day, as were others. She captured the children and audience with vivid stories depicting the history and struggles of Southern Blacks in America in day-to-day life.

Editorial

Continued from page 2

people want unity, material results and power to change the material conditions of the day-to-day existence of their communities.

So when we talk about unity, we are not just talking about cultural unity of the black community, we are talking about solidarity of all oppressed communities.

Since the Rodney King verdict the state government has stepped up systematic denial of rights. This includes the violations of constitutional due process legislated in the state of California, holding citizens without determination of probable cause for up to seven days.

If you want to join with others working to build a positive program to change the conditions that we are facing, please contact this publication TODAY!

Support International Campaign To Free Geronimo ji Jaga

P.O. Box 3585, Oakland, CA 94609
(510) 655-2587

Black Panther Party 10-Point Program

WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. WE WANT FREEDOM. WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES.

We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions that exist in our communities.

2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE.

We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all its people and give a high standard of living.

3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE CAPITALIST OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES.

We believe that the racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency that will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.

4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR THE SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS.

We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people in our communities with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.

Black Panther Party Co-Founder Dr. Huey P. Newton

5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY.

We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.

6. WE WANT COMPLETELY FREE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE.

We believe that the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities that will not only treat our illness, most of which have come about because of our oppression, but will also develop preventive medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.

7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES.

We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color, and poor people inside the United States. We believe it's our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.

8. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL WARS OF AGGRESSION.

We believe that the various conflicts that exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires of the U. S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U. S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE NOW HELD IN U. S. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AND MILITARY PRISONS AND JAILS. WE WANT TRIALS BY A JURY OF PEERS FOR ALL PERSONS CHARGED WITH SO-CALLED CRIMES UNDER THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY.

We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U. S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U. S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions that are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons are brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.

10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CONTROL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY.

When, during human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bounds that have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

COMMEMORATOR NEWS

LOCATIONS WHERE YOU CAN PICK-UP YOUR FREE-OF-CHARGE COMMEMORATOR NEWSPAPER, WHERE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE, WHERE YOU CAN $$DONATE$$ AND PARTICIPATE

NORTH OAKLAND

Bay Area Liq./Deli - 3214 San Pablo
East Bay Mkt. - 5350 M.L.K. Blvd.
General Liq./Groc. - 4301 Market
St. King's Mkt. - 5442 M.L.K. Blvd.
Merrakesh II Deli - 5751 Market St
Nassan Groc. - 3401 Adeline St.
N&A Mkt. - 3147 Adeline St.
New York Mkt. - 3446 Market St.
P&M Deli/Liq. - 1405 34th St.
Sana Mkt. - 3710 Teleg. Ave.
Saeed's & Abdul Liq. - 57th & Adeline

EAST OAKLAND

A&B Mini-Mart - 5913 E. 14thSt.
A-1Super Mkt. - 9509 E. 14th
A&M Market - 1880 E. 22nd St.
A&P Mkt./Liq. - 3615 Foothill Blvd.
Brand New Mkt. - 7923 MacArt. Blvd.
Better Trade Mkt. - 7838 E. 14th St
Big M Groc/Deli - 822 MacArt. Blvd.
Brookfield Groc. - 9786 Edes Ave.
Carriage Trade - 350 E., 18th/Park
Century Petroleum - 403 E. 12th ST
Dave's - 2484 Park Ave.
Giants Liq. - 7629 MacArt. Blvd.
Greer's Liq./Groc. - 619 98th Ave.
Harolds Mkt. - 7615 MacArt. Blvd.
Hub's Liq. Store - 9414 E. 14th St.
Islers Liq. - 5285 Foothill Blvd.
J&M Mkt. - 2151 Seminary Ave.
J&LJ Market - 2201 14th Ave.
Jim's Liq./Deli. - 8137 MacArthur
K&S Groc. - 2286 E. 14th St.
K&B Mkt. - 7701 Bancroft Ave.
Keeton Univ. Liq - 8737 McArt.
Lee's Mkt./Liq. - 96th/McArt. Blvd.
Lions Liq./Mkt. - 4100 Foothill Blvd.
L.T. Liq. - 7717 Bancroft Ave.
Lucky Spot Liq. - 700 Foothill Blvd
M&J Grocery - 7301 McArt. Blvd.
Mean Chey Mkt. - 4095 Foothill Blvd.
MacArt Mini Mart - 8888 MacArt. Blvd.
Mark Market - 8433 E. 14th St.
Niles Super Mkt. -1536 23rd Ave.
Discount Foods - 1920 3th Ave.
E&R Liq. - 2101 14th Ave.
Ene's Market - 7981 MacArthur Blvd.
FairFax Liq. - 5403 Foothill Blvd.
Family Market - 2697 Hillside
Food King's Super Mkt. - 8824 E. 14th
Food Town Groc. - 6423 E. 14th St
Food Mart - 6600 Foothill Blvd.
G&M Liquors - 8301 E. 14th
N&M Mkt. - 2731 13th Ave.
Oakland Food Ct. - 9422 Edes Ave.
Oak Tree Groc./Deli - 1601 28th Ave.
One Stop Liq. - 8400 E. 14th St.
Penny Saver Mkt. - 4800 Foothill Blvd
Pennanan Mkt. - 3201 38th Ave.
Plucky's Liq. Store - 6415 E. 14th St.
Popular Market - 1088 98th Ave.
Red Sea Market - 3800 Foothill Blvd.
Security Groc./Liq. - 201 E. 14th St.
Star Liq./Deli - 7940 E. 14thSt.
Sybil's Liq./Mkt. - 501 E. 18th St.
Shop-rite Mkt. - 5916 Bancroft Ave.
Tony's Liq/Groc. - 2003 23nd Ave.
Two Star Liq. - 2020 McArthur Blvd.
USA Corner Mkt. - 105th/Edes
Vernon's #1 - 3400 Vernon St.
W. Brown's -1933 Fruitvale Ave.

BERKELEY:

Brother Liq. - 3039 Shattuck Ave
Bob's Liq. - 2842 Sacra. Ave.
Dwight Liq. - 2440 Sacra. Ave.
Food Town Mkt. - 3049 Sacra Ave.
Red Apple Mkt. - 2967 Sacra. Ave.
Sacra. Mkt. - 2973 Sacra. Ave.
U.S. Liquors - 2842 Sacra. Ave.

Check it out, Yah!
The
COMMEMORATOR
know which way the *wind blows!*

Call To Action

Now is the time to organize.
Now is the time to unite!
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
in building strong grassroots movement to change the economic and social conditions of oppression in ourcommunity.
Now is the time to meet the basic material and social needs which the government neglects. We need people power to face the onslaught of oppression, exploitation and institutionalized racism.

You can help by calling your
COMMEMORATOR (510) 652-8828

Slavery may change its form or its name – its essence remains the same. Its essence may be expressed in these words: to be a slave is to be forced to work for someone else, just as to be master is to live on someone else's work. In antiquity... slaves were, in all honesty, called slaves. In the middle ages, they took the name serfs; nowadays they are called wage earners.

—Michael Bakunin

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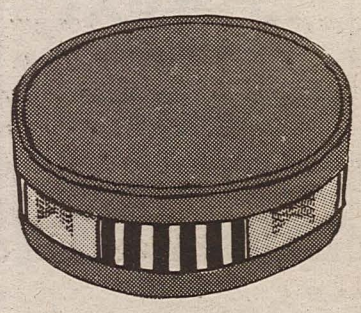

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Acknowledgement Of Late Issue

The Commemorator extends its deepest regrets for the delay in publishing this issue to the readers who have contacted us to inquire about their subscription, and all other readers who have been anxiously looking forward to the next issue. As you know, we intended to go to print much sooner, however, in an effort to obtain the news that is NOT being promulgated by the controlled media, to obtain and publish the truth that is not being told anywhere else, and to do that while constantly upgrading our standards of professionality among a diverse, all-volunteer staff, we have found it necessary to delay publishing unfinished material and to update our stories several times. We will endeavor to have our next issue out much sooner; we invite the assistance and participation of our readers in submitting stories for the editorial staff to consider, and in typing and laying out the paper. Call Rose at (510) 652-8828 if you can help. Your abiding patience and concern with our historic venture is forever appreciated.

In solidarity and struggle,

THE COMMEMORATOR STAFF

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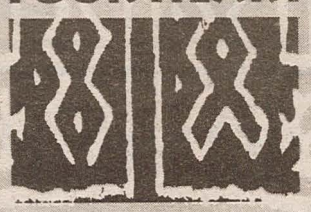

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THE COMMEMORATOR

Published every 2 months by the
Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party
Yearly Subscription Rates
(Domestic): $12
Second Class Postage Paid